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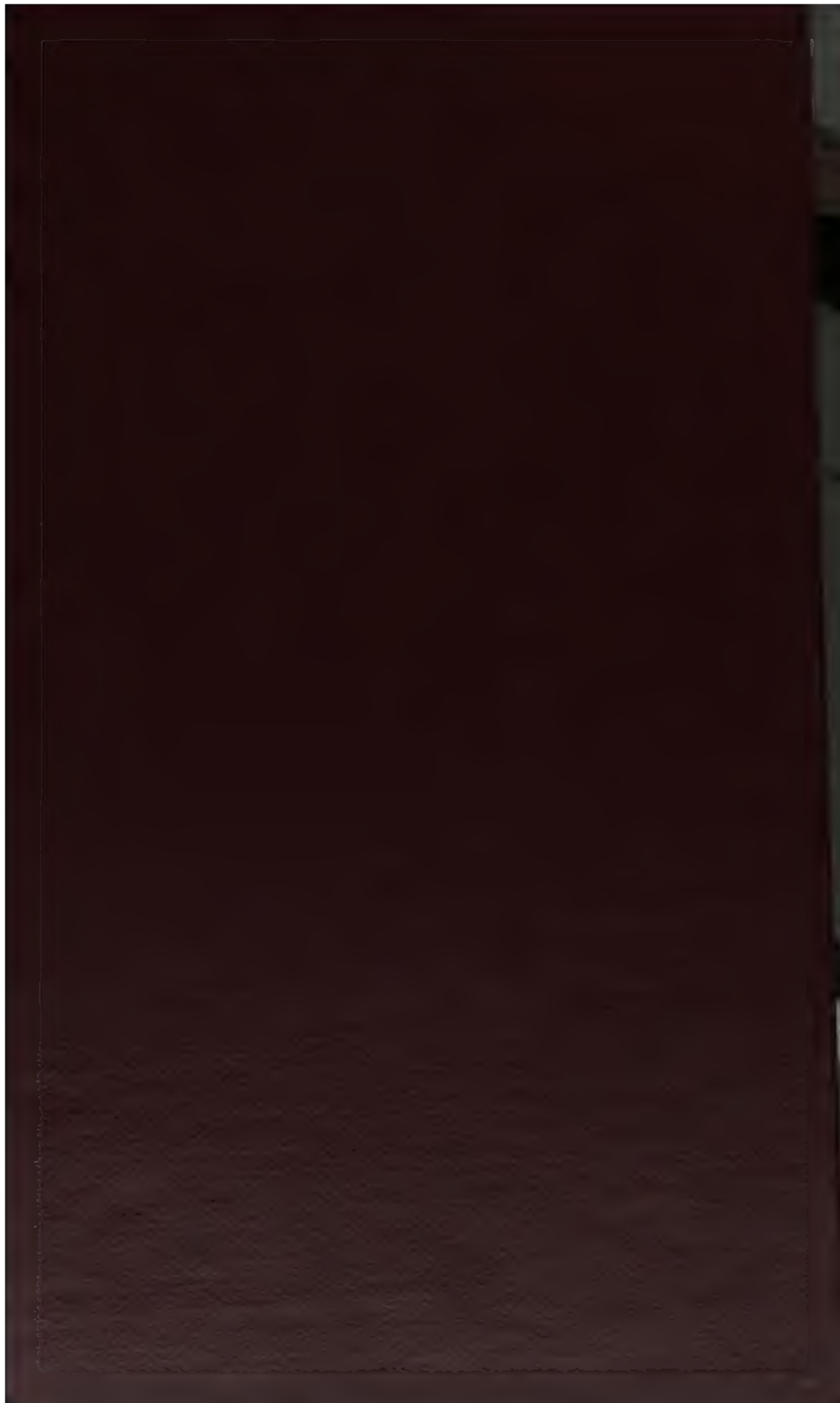
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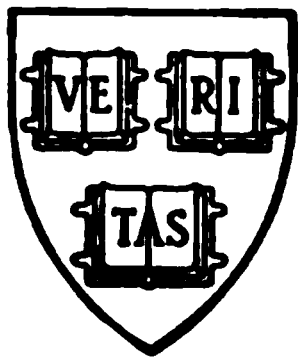
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**JOHN RANDOLPH**

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# JOHN RANDOLPH

OF ROANOKE

1773--1833

A BIOGRAPHY BASED LARGELY ON NEW MATERIAL .

BY

WILLIAM CABELL BRUCE

AUTHOR OF

"BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SELF-REVEALED" AND "BELOW THE JAMES"

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME II

G. P. Putnam's Sons

New York & London.

The Knickerbocker Press

1922



JOHN HANDCOCK

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## CHAPTER I

### “Like Sweet Bells Jangled”

When Randolph reached Richmond on his return from Russia to Roanoke, he was so ill that he had to take to his bed; and to bed or room he was confined until a day or so before the first Monday in November, when he found himself strong enough to proceed to Charlotte Court House and to address the people there on that day. On the second Monday of November, he addressed the people of Buckingham County, and on the third Monday of November the people of Prince Edward County; and he was prevented by rain only from addressing the people of Cumberland County on the fourth Monday of November.<sup>1</sup>

In all these speeches, doubtless, he still had sufficient command of his mental faculties to display some of his old brilliancy and force. This was certainly true of his speeches at Charlotte Court House and Prince Edward Court House, and his audience at Prince Edward Court House, at any rate, was willing to listen to him hour after hour. But to every really observant person, to whom he had been a familiar figure in the past, it was obvious that he was demented; and this impression was created even more by what he said and did when off the hustings than when on.

When he had retired from Congress in 1829, he had prevailed on Thomas T. Bouldin, of Charlotte County, then a Circuit Court Judge, to resign his seat on the bench

<sup>1</sup> Nov. 27, 1831, *Jackson Papers*, v. 79, Libr. Cong.

and to become his successor. Judge Bouldin always said that he yielded reluctantly to Randolph's persuasion, and only subject to the condition suggested by him that, whenever Randolph should desire to resume his old seat, he should be at liberty to do so. Judge Bouldin was elected, and, at the close of his first term, offered himself again as a candidate at the Congressional election in April, 1831. In the meantime, Randolph, too, while in Russia, had formally announced himself through Judge Leigh as a candidate at this election, but without notifying Judge Bouldin or his friends of his intention to do so. Subsequently, finding that he could not get back to the United States in time for the election, he withdrew his name as a candidate. Before he did this, however, Dr. Geo. W. Crump, who had made way for the return of Randolph to Congress in 1827, had offered himself as a candidate in opposition to Judge Bouldin with a view, it was said, of keeping the bed warm until it suited Randolph's convenience to get into it. Judge Bouldin was elected, but not until much bitterness of feeling had been stirred up among his friends by Randolph's conduct, which did not fail to excite a spirit of responsive bitterness in Randolph; and the action of Dr. Crump Randolph considered a piece of officious impertinence, as it had been taken by Dr. Crump without his consent or knowledge. But how he gave vent to his animosity towards each of the two offenders, we will let the Rev. John S. Kirkpatrick, a Presbyterian clergyman, tell in his own way.

“About a month after his arrival from Europe, he made the speech at Prince Edward Court House which I heard. Its avowed purpose, so far as any was avowed, was to set himself right before the people with reference to Judge Bouldin, but, in the six hours I stood drinking in, with quenchless avidity, every word from his lips, I heard nothing that availed, or that I could suppose was expected to avail, for this end. True, he had much to say of Judge Bouldin, and, for the most part, it



was highly complimentary, and was never ostensibly unkind; yet, in the most favorable light, in which his character and life were presented, there was always something, in the allusion or tone, that set him before us as one to be pitied, and borne with, rather than one to be approved and admired. Judge Bouldin, in a conference with Mr. Randolph the week before, incautiously said that, for his own part, he had been willing to pass by the slight he had received; but that his sons and sons-in-law had demanded that he should resent it, so far as to persist in his candidacy for Congress, notwithstanding Mr. Randolph had taken the field against him. Over and over again in his speech, did Mr. Randolph refer to this admission, saying that Judge Bouldin was a ‘wax nose,’ to be twisted, and shaped, and turned, in one direction or another, by his ‘sons and sons-in-law,’ at their pleasure. ‘What are they,’ he would say, ‘that he should surrender his judgment to theirs? He had more sense than all of them put together.’ I wondered why he so often came over the words, ‘sons and sons-in-law,’ and always with a most significant, sneer-like emphasis. I afterwards learned that one of the ‘sons-in-law’ was not regarded as a credit to the highly respectable, and much beloved, family of the Judge.

“Just before the speaking closed, Judge Bouldin gave an explanation of what he intended by the remark so often cited by Mr. Randolph, but I did not gather its import, for, during all the time he was speaking, Mr. Randolph, sitting behind him, kept us amused and laughing with interjectional comments on what the Judge was saying, which, piercing our ears with [their] fife-like shrillness, allowed nothing else to be attended to. Thus, the Judge’s opening remark was: ‘What Mr. Randolph has stated respecting our conference at Buckingham C. H. last week is strictly true.’ ‘Yes, it is true,’ piped out Randolph. ‘I never told but one lie in my life, and then my mother liked to have killed me for it.’ And so throughout the judge’s speech of ten or fifteen minutes. I have said that, in the reference to Judge Bouldin, there was a mingling of praise and disparagement, yet all so manoeuvred that no offence could be taken, or, at least, confessed to have been taken. Speaking of the Judge’s amiable character, Mr. Randolph declared that

he loved him dearly. 'Yes,' he emphasized, 'with all his faults I love him—and you all know and regret that he has some; as I trust he loves me with all mine, which, although of another kind, are greater than his.' Closing what appeared to be a sincere and fervent eulogy of the Judge, in which he spoke of his talents, integrity, and public services, he reverted to his kindness of heart and gentle manners, and ended in these words: 'I do not believe that a more amiable man breathes on the earth than Judge Bouldin. Great pity he isn't a woman!' If there was kindness, real or affected, towards Judge Bouldin, there was none toward Dr. Crump, but, instead, undisguised, undiluted bitterness. His offence was that he had offered himself as a candidate for Congress in Mr. Randolph's old district, not, indeed, in opposition to the latter, but, far worse, as the friend, the vindicator or substitute, unsolicited, and unauthorized by him. This was a presumption for which there was no atonement and no mercy. The castigation of Dr. Crump was reserved for the cap-stone of the whole-day speech, as though his audacity had supplied the materials for the tower, nay, the very spire, of a climax. In his invective, Mr. Randolph said in a tone in which contempt and hatred were so blended it was hard to tell which predominated: 'I have a very slight acquaintance with the gentleman. True, he once made me a visit at my home, but he came uninvited, and departed when he chose to do so.' Dr. Crump, who was present, and heard with apparent composure all that was said about him, attempted a vindication of his character from this last attack, and, stepping forward, as Judge Bouldin desisted from his vain effort to get a hearing, stated that he did make the visit to which a reference had been made, but that it was in compliance with an express, urgent, written invitation from Mr. Randolph—that he had been cordially received, and hospitably entertained. He went on to detail the occasion, reasons, and all the circumstances of the invitation and the visit. But Mr. Randolph would not hear him; for, as soon as he began speaking, the former commenced his preparations for leaving the house, and, as he was being supported and led by his body-guard, from his seat to the door, he discharged his last, the Parthian arrow—'I never did invite you to my house, and,

what is more, I never mean to do it.’ (a) These were the last words I heard from Mr. Randolph that day. These personal encounters between the parties named could have consumed but a small portion of the day.”<sup>1</sup>

The burden of Randolph’s speech at Prince Edward Court House was what he conceived to be the painful decadence undergone by Virginia in recent years, and the inferiority of the younger men of his old district to their fathers. Thus, after making a slurring, though partly complimentary, reference to Wm. M. Watkins, the brother of Henry A. Watkins, (b) he went on to say, according to his own subsequent version of his words, that his friend, Henry A. Watkins, although one of the kindest and best men in the world, would be the first to admit the higher claims of his father on the country for general utility and energy of character; that [this sportively] he was too old to know much of his father’s sons personally but that he could venture to affirm that, placed in their grandfather’s shoes, and having to keep off the calf whilst the wife milked the cow, they never would have achieved what the grandfather had done in point of character and fortune. The latent malice in these remarks is too manifest to require comment. Equally slighting, too, were similar observations made by Randolph on the descendants of Capt. John Morton, Col. Wm. Morton, Capt. Nat. Price, Patrick Henry, George Mason, Chief Justice Marshall, John Wickham and John Taylor of Caroline; “In short,” he said, “look at the Lees, Washingtons, Randolphs—what woeful degeneracy.”<sup>2</sup>

Disordered as Randolph’s mind was at this time, the following words from a letter, written by him to Dr. Brockenbrough from Charlotte Court House immediately after he had addressed the people of Buckingham County,

<sup>1</sup> Personal Recollections of the Rev. Jno. S. Kirkpatrick, D.D., MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from J. R. to H. A. Watkins, Jan. 21, 1832, filed in Coalter’s Exor. *vs.* Randolph’s exor., Cl’k’s Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

furnish proof enough that his old literary instinct for form and color had not deserted him:

“On my road to Buckingham, I passed a night in Farmville, in an apartment which in England they would not have thought fit for my servant; nor on the continent did I ever occupy so mean a one. Wherever I stop, it is the same—walls black and filthy—bed and furniture sordid—furniture scanty and mean, generally broken—no mirror—no fire-irons—in short, dirt and discomfort, universally prevail, and in most private houses the matter is not mended. The cows milked half a mile off—or not got up, and no milk to be had at any distance—no jordan—in fact, the old gentry are gone and the *nouveaux riches*, where they have the inclination, do not know how to live. *Biscuit*, not half *cuit*, every thing, animal and vegetable, smeared with melted butter or lard. Poverty stalking through the land, while we are engaged in political metaphysics, and, amidst our filth and vermin, like the Spaniard and Portuguese, look down with contempt on other nations, England and France especially. We hug our lousy cloaks around us, take another *chaw of tubbaker*, float the room with nastiness, or ruin the grate and fire-irons, where they happen not to be rusty, and try conclusions upon constitutional points.”<sup>1</sup> (a)

During the winter of 1831–1832, Randolph’s dementia assumed a more and more tragic character, to which drink and the habitual use of opium, fastened upon him by the promptings of disease and pain, added their dark pigments too. In the opinion of John Marshall, of Charlotte County, and Judge Wm. Leigh, his two most intimate friends, in his last years he was an insane man from the time of his return from Russia until the month of May, 1832, when his mind cleared up and became once more comparatively serene; a condition which, with occasional aberrations, continued almost until the last hours of his life.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 344.

<sup>2</sup> Coalter’s Exor. *vs.* Randolph’s Exor., Cl’k’s Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

No good purpose would be subserved by going very deeply into the painful testimony which was brought out with respect to the insanity of Randolph at this period during the course of the litigation that was subsequently waged over his wills.

No small part of his unreasoning impulses and actions sprang from his belief that all, or practically all, of his overseers and slaves had been faithless to him during his absence. That there had been indeed considerable misconduct on the part of some of his slaves, and a certain degree of dereliction of duty on the part of his overseers, evidence is by no means lacking to establish; but a shortage in his usual crop and a theft of wool by his negro headman would seem to have afforded the only really substantial justification for a mad resentment which involved every one on his Roanoke plantations in its excesses.

Among his favorite servants were an old man whom he called “Daddy Essex,” and his beloved John and Juba; but now his heart was steeled against them too. Whenever Essex came into his presence, he would break out into a fit of passion. He accused him of keeping a tavern during his absence and entertaining a peddler, and even went so far as to strike him with a stick. Of John and Juba, though he was slow to withdraw his confidence from John, he said: “When I arrived in New York, I would not have taken for John or Juba, or for the smallest child either of them had, 2,000 guineas; but now I would as soon sell them to a negro trader as not.” Finally, he sent off all, or nearly all, of his house servants, with a few exceptions, to a plantation owned by Judge Leigh on Dan River. Even John was driven for a time into exile from his person. In place of these trained servants, he introduced a number of “cornfield” negroes into his house; among them a field hand named Moses, whom he called “Bull,” and of whom he was soon heard saying: “Moses goes rooting about the house like a hog.” Once or twice he even either



inflicted, or attempted to inflict, personal injuries upon members of his household.<sup>1</sup>

His mind also became enslaved to strange hallucinations. One was that his life depended upon ass' milk, and some of his later letters to his friend Nathan Loughborough are filled with feverish appeals to him to hasten the progress to Roanoke of certain jennies that Loughborough had undertaken to forward to him for the purpose of supplying him with such milk.<sup>2</sup> Then later, when he had two fine jennies at Roanoke, and was having them milked daily, his mind cherished the delusion that he was under a contract with His Satanic Majesty not to drink any of this milk until he had purchased two colts or horses which had been sired by his stallion, Janus. On one occasion, he told Judge Leigh that he was glad of his arrival, because Mrs. Leigh and her little boy had been upstairs in his house for sometime, and that he had had hard work to keep the devils from them; on another, that there was a man in the next room writing a dead man's will with a dead man's hand.

He at times exhibited angry and vindictive feelings against almost all persons with whom he had had any intercourse, with a few exceptions, and occasionally he was possessed by the sheer desire to kill of a maniac.<sup>3</sup>

The very first time that Judge Leigh saw him after his return from Russia he became satisfied that his mind was disordered.

"My opinion," Judge Leigh testified in the litigation over Randolph's wills, "was formed upon his appearance and manner—and the total change in his language, feelings, and conduct. He had in his appearance a fierce wildness; he was ever restless, scarcely ever still, and took more exercise than I

<sup>1</sup> Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor., Cl'k's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>2</sup> Nathan Loughborough, MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor., Clerk's office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

thought he was able to bear; he had gusts of extreme passion without adequate cause, and he seemed to me when I was with him to sleep scarcely at all.”<sup>2</sup>

In many respects, as is too often the case when the mind is dethroned, he was the exact reverse of his former self. Edmund Badger, one of the proprietors of the hotel in Philadelphia, in which Randolph died, testified in the Randolph will litigation that, even in his last hours, Randolph’s manner was “peculiarly pleasing and entertaining.” Now it was excited, irate, savage. Before, his mode of living had been generous; now it was penurious. His conversation was at times obscene, though John Marshall, who had known him intimately for years, testified in the same litigation: “I never heard him use such language previous to his return from Russia. He was generally very chaste and delicate in his language.” His relations to women had always been marked by the highest degree of chivalrous deference and refinement. At this time, he wrote on one occasion to Henry A. Watkins: “I write with a blotting pen, upon greasy paper—unclean, all offensive in the eye of God. I am under the powerful influence of the Prince of Darkness, who tempts me with a beautiful mulattress.” In the past, his treatment of his slaves had been so kind and, in many instances, affectionate that John Marshall testified in the will litigation “that his slaves almost worshipped him”; now he was harsh and abusive to them to an extreme degree. He had always been truth itself, and now he repeatedly resorted to cunning or falsehood to carry some freakish point.<sup>1</sup>

If anyone has been so fortunate as never to have had a relation or friend bereft of reason, and is yet desirous of knowing how pitiable is the estate of “the fair and radiant

<sup>1</sup> Coalter’s Exor. *vs.* Randolph’s Exor., Clerk’s office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

palace," in which the soul resides in health, when it is no longer "by good angels tenanted," all that he has to do is to peer into the black prison-house of frenzy, horror, sensual nakedness, and despair which the depositions in the Randolph will litigation exposed to the eye of court and jury.

About the 25th day of April, 1831, Randolph was removed to the home of John Marshall, at Charlotte Court House, at a time when his condition was so feeble that his death seemed near at hand. (*a*) In the will litigation, Marshall testified that, while there, Randolph sent for him very often, and, when he came into his room, would frequently say: "You are too late, it is all over." And sometimes he had a small bell in his hand which he would ring slowly and say: "It is all over"; and sometimes, instead of ringing the bell himself, he would make John ring it. Again, at times, he would seem to be perturbed by some vague fear and would ask Marshall if he would stand by him, and yet no sooner would Marshall come into his room than he would exercise all the address, of which he was capable, to induce him by one suggestion or another to leave it. But it is gratifying to state that in the ashes of Randolph's former identity, after he returned from Russia, there still lived some of its nobler traits. Though he could no longer say grace at his table without being at times incited to profanity by some trivial occurrence, he still persisted in going through its forms. A witness in the will litigation, Wyatt Cardwell, testified that once, when John was given a whipping at his master's instance for gross misconduct, it was plain that the latter was pleased to see how lightly the chastisement was administered. On one occasion, during dinner at Roanoke, when Judge Leigh was present, Randolph spoke of Judge Leigh's grave face, and later said that he was sorry that Leigh had come. But, when he saw that Leigh's feelings were hurt, he arose from his seat, and took one of his old

friend's hands in both of his and shook it, uttering a soothing word as he did so in his kindest tone.

More than once, when he was attempting to make a fresh will, his mind reverted to the desire to emancipate all his slaves that was such a rich refrain in his life; though in executing a previous will which was stricken down after his death, as the fruit of mental incompetency, he had forsaken for a time this purpose. He had a small phial of the opiate that he was in the habit of using so freely after his return from Russia. It was labelled “poison,” and he declared that he kept this phial so that he could use its contents to put an end to his existence in case he should do anything dishonorable. Much else had been completely transformed, but his honorable spirit still strove to work itself free from the murk of insanity.<sup>1</sup> (a)

“I am fast sinking,” he said, “into an opium-eating sot; but, please God! I will shake off the incubus yet before I die; for, whatever difference of opinion may exist on the subject of suicide, there can be none as to ‘*rushing into the presence of our Creator*’ in a state of drunkenness, whether produced by opium or brandy.”<sup>2</sup>

But even the sad Acheron or the black Cocytus of mental distraction is lit up by a momentary gleam now and then. In the possession of the Library of Congress, are quite a number of letters written by Randolph to Andrew Jackson between the date of his return from Russia and the date of his temporary restoration to reason in May, 1832; and it is impossible to note some of the vagaries that play over these letters, melancholy as is the infirmity revealed by them as a whole, without a smile. It is certain that such an irascible man as Andrew Jackson would never have submitted as patiently as he did to

<sup>1</sup> Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor., Cl'k's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 344.

Randolph's criticisms in some of the letters on the members of his first and second cabinets had he not been fully conscious of the mental irresponsibility of the writer.

In one letter, Randolph expressed his regret that Jackson had been surrounded by such advisers, with a single exception, as the members of his first cabinet; and also his fear that "Leviathan" (the Bank of the United States) had too many friends among the members of his second cabinet, and that this was true not only of the "monster in Chestnut Street" but of the "American System" and Internal Improvements too.<sup>1</sup>

In a later letter, Randolph declared that Jackson's first Lord of the Treasury was most assuredly leading him to the Caudian Forks where he must be politically Burgoyned.<sup>2</sup>

In another letter, he informed Jackson that he deemed it his duty to tell him as a friend that he was surrounded by evil counsellors.<sup>3</sup> In the same letter, with his usual honesty, sane or insane, he let Jackson know that his views differed from his in regard to the Tariff, Internal Improvements, and the Distribution of the Federal Surplus, and that, if Jackson were a friend of the Chestnut Street Monster, as he was its bitter enemy, it would be impossible for him to support him cordially.

Later, in still another letter, he hinted that "Leviathan" was making loans to needy members of Congress and to Cabinet ministers in embarrassed circumstances, who had houses full of children and no estate.<sup>4</sup>

In yet another letter, he warned Jackson that, if the latter did not avert the impending struggle between the great slave-holding interest and the Federal Government by a prompt redress of the intolerable wrongs of that

<sup>1</sup> Richm., Oct. 29, 1831, *Jackson Papers*; v. 79, Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Mar. 11, 1832, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 19, 1831, *Jackson Papers* v. 79, Libr. Cong.

<sup>4</sup> Roanoke, Mar. 11, 1832, *Jackson Papers*, v. 80, Libr. Cong.

interest, he should, with Earl Grey, “stand by his order.”<sup>1</sup> In this letter, he also said:

“I am resolute not to assist in the subjugation of South Carolina; but, if she does move (as I fear she will), to make common cause with her against the usurpations of the Federal Government and of the Supreme Court especially. The late infamous decision of those minions of arbitrary power will give us Georgia. Everything south of Ohio, except perhaps Kentucky and the western district of Virginia, must be with us. With this noble country and Cuba, where we can make a hogs-head of sugar as easily as a pound can be grown on the Mississippi or in Florida, we shall have a vast empire capable of indefinite improvement and of supporting easily 40,000,000 of people.”

With Havana and the Bay of Tampa, the only port in the Gulf of Mexico capable of receiving a first rate line-of-battle ship, they would have, Randolph also said, a slip-knot around the throat of the Mississippi, and could strangle the commerce of the “free States,” northwest of the River Ohio, if these States gave them any annoyance.

The imminence of a deadly breach between the Northern and Southern portions of the United States was not so great, however, that one of the proudest men in the world, when he was himself, could not urge Jackson in this letter to send him as our minister either to London, where Van Buren then was, or to Paris.

“Van,” he said, “is the best of the set, but he is too great an intriguer, and besides wants personal dignity and weight of character. He is an adroit, dapper, little managing man, but he can’t inspire respect, much less veneration. He is very well in his place—not where he now is, because the English are the most fastidious people on earth. You may talk as much nonsense as you please, but you must not betray a want of education. Now, Van Buren cannot speak or write

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Mar. 18, 1832, *Id.*

the English language correctly, and I can see the eyebrows of the fashionable raised at his false pronunciation. He always says 'consitherable' for considerable, etc., etc. A single substitution of *will* for *shall*, or a single false quantity would blow him up. (a) For either of these embassies I offer you my services. For that of England I am more fit than any man I know, unless perhaps Mr. Gallatin. For that and a popular assembly or a public meeting I am particularly well qualified. You must not send needy people abroad but especially to England. Your minister there must *give* as well as *receive* dinners. I ask no outfit—let the one I have serve, and I will go, stay out my two, three or four years. Don't mistake me, I am not asking for office—I scorn it and spurn the idea."

In a subsequent letter from Roanoke, Randolph's mind, or what was left of it, was still running on the same subject, and he said that, if Jackson would send him to England as an unpaid, secret, confidential agent, he would discharge the duties of the mission gratuitously; that his character stood high with all parties in England; that Lords Harrowby, Calthorpe, and Wynford, late Chief Justice of the Bench of Common Pleas, looked upon him as a high aristocrat, and that even old Eldon was in the habit of giving him a nod of recognition. "I stand well with every interest in England," he said. "There I am Alcibiades; here Diogenes." In the same letter, Randolph further said: "In a word I can do, and, if you shall permit me, I will do, our country and your administration more service for nothing than you can procure from all your diplomatic troops abroad, and I serve volunteer and find myself. I do not ask even a ration."<sup>1</sup>

Granting that Alcibiades and Diogenes were not beyond the range of Andrew Jackson's early classical education, he must have felt somewhat perplexed when he received these words in an earlier letter from Randolph:

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Mar. 28, 1828 (*sic*), really 1832, *Jackson Papers*, v. 80, Libr. Cong.

“But, my dear Sir, your letter has lifted a load from my mind and put me where I hope ever to stand in *my own court* towards you—on a footing of unreserved confidence and esteem, and, so long as I have this feeling in my own breast, I shall feel assured of your reciprocal friendship for me. If Alexander be satisfied of the friendship of Hephæstus, he will care little about his estimation of his lieutenants. Now, although you are not Alexander (that would be fulsome flattery), and I trust that I am something better than his minion (the nature of their connection, if I forget not, was Greek love), yet, if I could discern in your lieutenants an Eumenes, or even an Antigonus, Lysimachus, Perdiccas or Antipater he should have my voice.”<sup>1</sup>

These various letters were attended by an accompaniment of violent abuse aimed at various public characters:

Ritchie was holding with the hare and running with the hounds, and, if the bug were worth his resentment, he could crush him.<sup>2</sup>

Clay had cut his throat with his own tongue.<sup>3</sup>

Calhoun, who had always had a knack of turning young men's heads, when he was young himself and with a great character for talents, and yet greater for stern uncompromising public virtue, had turned out to be an old battered “He-Bawd”; another Sir Pandarus of Troy, *quoad* procurement of offices for his adherents, in order to obtain the highest for himself.<sup>4</sup> (a)

We have dwelt upon these babblings of a deranged intellect largely for the purpose of bringing out the gross injustice of the hostile or unreflecting writers, notably Powhatan Bouldin, who have garnished their pages with extravagant incidents culled from the later years of

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Mar. 1, 1832, *Jackson Papers*, v. 80, Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, Feb. 26, 1832.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, Mar. 18, 1832.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, March 27, 1832.



Randolph's life as if they were fair illustrations of what he was even when sane.

In May, 1832, as we have said, Randolph's mind became lucid. On the first occasion, when the change became truly obvious to John Marshall, he was alone with him. During the interview, Randolph burst into tears and said: "Bear with me, my friend; this is unmanly, but I am hard pressed." Apparently he was suffering great pain. "It is impossible—I speak it reverently—," he further said, "that the Almighty himself, consistent with his holy counsel, can withhold this bitter cup. It is necessary to afflict me thus to subdue my stubborn will." He then shut his eyes, uttered a few words of prayer audibly, and then seemed to be praying in a low whisper.<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, there was a marked improvement in his appetite, his spirits, and his disposition. He even gained flesh, or, rather perhaps, as he put it on a previous occasion in his life, skin. His temper became cheerful and his judgments of men, including his political enemies, kinder.<sup>2</sup> But, even after the lapse of three or four months, the reaction in his condition had not been so decided that he could not describe it as wretched in the extreme.<sup>3</sup>

In one respect, insanity did not work any change in Randolph at all. The political convictions, which he expressed to Andrew Jackson, when he was insane, were but his convictions both before he lost, and after he recovered, his reason. With his return to sanity, he did not abate one jot of his stern enmity to the United States Bank, or the protective tariff. While his mind was still in eclipse, he had said in a letter:

"I know Jackson to be firm on the Bank of the United States, and I believe the tariff too. In United States Bank stock there will be a fall, for everything is settled by the London prices, and *there* will be a panic; but the bank will bribe

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 349.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

through. I detest it and shall do all I can to defeat it, even by coming into Congress next election *si le Roy (peuple) le veut*. When the Union shall crumble to pieces, the bank will stand; the courts and its debtors will sustain it in each grain of our rope of sand.”<sup>1</sup>

If this prophecy proved false, and the bank did crumble before the Union, it was only because neither bank nor anything else could well withstand the Bersekir rage of Andrew Jackson at its worst. Afterwards, when the bright disk of Randolph’s mind was no longer darkened, he came to the aid of Jackson in a vigorous letter to Mark Alexander, of Virginia, one of his former Congressional colleagues:

“I have just received,” he said, “your blank envelope covering the Telegraph of the 21st. I write to entreat you to tell Warren R. Davis and his colleagues (alas! for poor Johnston) that, if by their votes the United States Bank bill shall pass the House of Representatives, they will receive the curses loud and deep of every old-school Republican of the South. To embarrass Jackson is a small gain compared with saddling the country with that worst and most flagrant of the usurpations of the Federal Government and the most dangerous engine against the rights and very existence of the States. I am warm and abrupt, but I am dying, and have not time to be more courtly and circumlocutory. The tariff, the internal improvement jobs, and the Supreme Court combined are not to be put into the scale against this accursed thing. The man who supports the bank, and denounces the tariff as unconstitutional, may take his choice between knave or fool, unless he admits that he is both. In one case, the power to lay duties, excises, etc., is granted; in the other no such power is given. The true key is that the *abuse* under pretence of exercise of any power (midnight judiciary, etc.) is unconstitutional. This unlocks every difficulty. Killing a man may be justifiable homicide, chance medley, manslaughter or murder according

<sup>1</sup> Garland, 352, Jan. 10, 1832.

to the motives and circumstances of the case; an unwise but honest exercise of a power may be blamed, but it is not unconstitutional; but every usurped power (as the bank) is so.”<sup>1</sup>

The bank bill passed both houses of Congress, but was vetoed by Jackson, who never rested until “Leviathan” was floating lifeless on its side with its white upturned belly exposed to scorn. But, before Jackson vetoed the bank bill, events had been in train to produce a lasting rupture between Jackson and Randolph. The latter hated, with an inappeasable hatred, the protective tariff, which, beginning in 1824, throve so rapidly on the successive triumphs of its own greedy rapacity that Randolph could say of it even more truly in 1832 than he had said of it in 1824:

“I cannot believe that we are at any time hereafter long to be exempt from the demands of those sturdy beggars who will take no denial. Every concession does but render every fresh demand and new concession more easy. It is like those dastard nations who vainly think to buy peace.”<sup>2</sup>

Subsequently, when the truth was brought home to him that South Carolina was inflexibly resolved to nullify the tariff of 1832, that Jackson was inflexibly resolved to enforce the laws of the Union at any cost of treasure or blood, and that the principle of State Sovereignty, to which he had been so long attached, was about to be sacrificed between the very horns of its own altar, he felt that the time had come, much as he admired the man of whom he had so often spoken as the “old hero,” and deeply grateful as he was to him for his unfailing loyalty, gentleness, and compassion, to live up to the assurance that he had given to Edward Everett in his speech on Retrenchment and Reform, when he turned upon Everett with these words:

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 353.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1823-24; v. 2, 2372.

“The gentleman from Massachusetts warned us that, if the individual we seek to elevate shall succeed, he will in his turn become the object of public pursuit, and that the same pack will be unkennelled at his heels that have run his rival down. It may be so. I have no hesitation to say that, if his conduct shall deserve it, and I live, I shall be one of that *pack*; because I maintain the interest of stockholders, against presidents, directors, and cashiers.”<sup>1</sup>

Randolph had already, with the first flashes of the coming storm, declared that he would have himself buckled on his horse, Radical, and would fight for the South to the last breath.<sup>2</sup> And now, feeble as he was, he passed from county to county in his former district, summoning all who had ever felt the spell of his eye or voice to the shock of the direful and bloody contest which seemed to be actually at hand.

As soon as he had heard of the Proclamation issued against South Carolina by Jackson, of which it may be said in the words of John Adams about an earlier event in our history slightly paraphrased, “Then was the child Nationality born,” he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough:

“Your letter of the 12th was received late last night, whilst I was under the influence of morphine and blue-pill; but, such was the interest I took in it and in the Jesuitical comments of Mr. ‘Enquirer’ Ritchie on the ferocious and bloodthirsty proclamation of our Djezzar Pacha, (*a*) that I did not close an eye until daybreak. I am now just out of bed (1 o’clock P.M.) and not more than half alive; indeed not so much. The apathy of our people is most alarming. If they do not rouse themselves to a sense of our condition, and put down this wretched old man, the country is irretrievably ruined. The mercenary troops, who have embarked for Charleston, have not disappointed me; they are working in their vocation, poor devils. I trust that no quarter will be given to them.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 301.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 358.

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 16, 1832, Garland, v. 2, 359.

A week or so later, Randolph wrote to Jacob Harvey:

“My life is ebbing fast. What will the New York *Evening Post* say to Ritchie’s apology for the proclamation in his *Enquirer* of the 1st inst? Never was there so impudent a thing. It seems then that the President did not know, good easy man, what *his* proclamation contained. Verily, I believe it. He is now all for law and the civil power and shudders at blood. ‘Save me from my friends,’ is a good old Spanish proverb, but his *soi disant* friends are his bitterest enemies, and use him as a tool for their own unhallowed purposes of guilty ambition. They have first brought him into odium and then sunk him into contempt! Alas! Alas!”<sup>1</sup>

Later, during the same month, Randolph wrote to Harvey:

“I am now much worse than when I wrote you last and see no probability of my ever recovering sufficiently to leave this place. The springs of life are worn out. Indeed, in the abject state of the public mind, there is nothing worth living for. It is a merciful dispensation of Providence that death can release the captive from the clutches of the tyrant. I was not born to endure a master; I could not brook military despotism in Europe, but at home it is not to be endured. I could not have believed that the people would so soon have shown themselves unfit for free government. I leave to General Jackson, and the Hartford men, and the ultra Federalists and tories, and the office-holders and office-seekers, *their triumph over the liberties of the country. They will stand damned to everlasting fame.*”<sup>2</sup>

In his speeches to the People of his former District, though so frail that he had to speak for the most part from his chair, he spoke at least once, as we shall see further on, with commanding power. Nor did he ever exhibit more address, perseverance, or masterful force of will

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Jan. 4, 1833, *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 102.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 31, 1833, *Ibid.*

than he did in obtaining from his old constituents resolutions denunciatory of the political doctrines promulgated in the Proclamation. Andrew Jackson did not lack friends in Randolph's home district; nor were patriotic and clear-sighted men wanting in it who had no sympathy whatever with the nullification movement inaugurated by Calhoun and the other South Carolina leaders of his faction; but Randolph's former constituents, as a rule, were infatuated with his extreme ideas about State Sovereignty and, wherever he went, with but little dissent, they adopted his resolutions condemning the Proclamation.

With the nullification dogma of Calhoun Randolph had no patience whatever. Subtle abstractions were always abhorrent to his practical mind; but the right of Revolution, that is the right of renouncing the Federal Union altogether in a proper cause, was one that nothing could have induced him to surrender. As far back as the tariff discussion in 1824, he had said:

“And I say again, if we are to submit to such usurpations, give me George Grenville, give me Lord North for a master. It is in this point of view that I most deprecate the bill. If from the language I have used, any gentleman shall believe I am not as much attached to this Union as anyone on this floor, he will labor under a great mistake. But there is no magic in this word Union; I value it as the means of preserving the liberty and happiness of the people. Marriage itself is a good thing; but the marriages of Mezentius were not so esteemed. The marriage of Sinbad the Sailor with the corse of his deceased wife was an union; and just such an union will this be if by a bare majority in both Houses this bill shall become a law.”<sup>1</sup> (a)

Even through the distorting haze of madness, with the prescience which was one of his remarkable gifts, he had seen the real significance of the conflict between South

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1823-24; 2368.

Carolina and the Federal Government over the protective tariff. He had predicted that civil war was at hand; that South Carolina would fight, and that Jackson would then indeed hang as high as Haman Calhoun, Hayne, McDuffie, and Hamilton, the chiefs of the Nullification Party in South Carolina, if he could lay his hands on them. In one of his distraught moments he wrote to Jackson that Calhoun had fallen into the very trap that had caught and destroyed Clay: "He is self-mutilated," he declared; "like the fanatic that emasculated himself."<sup>1</sup>

Towards the end of the year 1832, after he had recovered his reason, Randolph wrote to Jackson: "I wish most intensely that I could have even half an hour's interview with you."<sup>2</sup> Two days later, he wrote to him that he was then in a situation to recede with dignity, and that he spoke the language of many of Jackson's staunchest friends when he expressed the hope that Jackson would give to their sister, South Carolina, ample time for consideration.<sup>3</sup> And now, knowing as few knew, how unbending Jackson's will was, he was more than willing even to call in his arch foe, Henry Clay, as a buffer between it and the Commonwealth upon which it was about to descend with inexorable force.

In his speech at Buckingham Court House, Randolph is reported as saying to his audience:

"I cannot express to you how deeply I am penetrated with a sense of the danger which at this moment threatens its existence [the existence of the Union]. If Madison filled the Executive Chair, he might be bullied into some compromise; if Monroe was in power, he might be coaxed into some adjustment of this difficulty; but Jackson is obstinate, headstrong, and fond of fight. I fear matters must come to an open rup-

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Mar. 28, 1828 (*sic*), really 1832, *Jackson Papers*, v. 80, Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Charlotte C. H., Dec. 4, 1832, *Jackson Papers*, v. 81, Libr. Cong.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, Dec. 6, 1832, *Jackson Papers*, v. 81, Libr. Cong.

ture; if so, this Union is gone. There is one man, and one man only, who can save this Union; that man is Henry Clay. I know he has the power; I believe he will be found to have the patriotism and firmness equal to the occasion.”<sup>1</sup>

But it was at Charlotte Court House, on Feb. 4, 1833, that Randolph shone at this time as few men have ever done when they could say of themselves truthfully as he said of himself on this occasion that the prostration of their mental powers had kept so closely abreast with that of their bodily that it was hard for them to decide which rode the foremost horse. His object at this meeting, to use a modern political term, was to “jam through,” by his eloquence and over-bearing will, a series of resolutions condemning the Proclamation.

Happily for us, Winslow Robinson was the Secretary of the meeting, and drew up a report of its proceedings which was long, if it is not still, preserved. The report says that Randolph was in a state of extreme feebleness; that he had traversed the distance between Roanoke and Charlotte Court House [some 12 or 13 miles] the day before; that he was lifted to his seat on the bench of the County Court; and that he rose and spoke a few minutes; but soon sat down exhausted and continued to speak sitting; though sometimes for a moment the excitement of his feelings brought him to his feet; and that he ended his speech by moving a set of resolutions of which a copy was annexed to the report.<sup>2</sup>

It was at Randolph's request that the use of the Court House for the occasion had been permitted, and at his request, too, the County magistrates who held their sessions in it adjourned as soon as he appeared in the building. He made the requests because in his debilitated condition at that time it was necessary for him to measure out his strength drop by drop.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 361.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 192.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, 175.



By Bouldin we are told that he began with three dress coats on, but that before he concluded he had on only one, and that he spoke with a glass of toddy beside him from which he drank freely from time to time.<sup>1</sup>

The resolutions submitted by Randolph on this occasion are worth reading, if for no other reason because of the lucidity and point which characterize everything of this kind that ever left his hands. The last resolution of the series relates to the mission upon which Benjamin Watkins Leigh had been recently sent by the State of Virginia to South Carolina for the purpose of promoting a reconciliation between that State and the Federal Government.

“1. Resolved, that, while we retain a grateful sense of the many services rendered by Andrew Jackson, Esq., to the United States, we owe it to our country and to our posterity to make our solemn protest against many of the doctrines of his late proclamation.

“2. Resolved, that Virginia ‘is, and of right ought to be, a free, sovereign, and independent State;’ that she became so by her own separate act, which has been since recognized by all the civilized world, and has never been disavowed, retracted, or in any wise impaired or weakened by any subsequent act of hers.

“3. Resolved, that when, for purposes of common defence and common welfare, Virginia entered into a strict league of amity and alliance with the other twelve colonies of British North America, she parted with no portion of her sovereignty, although, from the necessity of the case, the authority to enforce obedience thereto was, in certain cases and for certain purposes, delegated to the common agents of the whole Confederacy.

“4. Resolved, that Virginia has never parted with the right to recall the authority so delegated for good and sufficient cause, and to secede from the Confederacy, whenever she shall

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 175.

find the benefits of union exceeded by its evils; union being the means of securing liberty and happiness, and not the end to which these should be sacrificed.

“5. Resolved, that the ALLEGIANCE of the people of Virginia is due to HER; that to her their obedience is due, while to them she owes protection against all the consequences of such obedience.

“6. Resolved, that we have seen with deep regret that Andrew Jackson, Esq., President of the United States, has been influenced by designing counsellors to subserve the purposes of their own guilty ambition, to disavow the principles to which he owed his election to the Chief Magistracy of the Government of the United States, and to transfer his real friends and supporters, bound hand and foot, to the tender mercies of his and their bitterest enemies—the *ultra*-Federalists, *ultra*-bank, *ultra*-internal improvement, and Hartford Convention, men—the habitual scoffers at States Rights—and to their instrument—the venal and prostituted press—by which they have endeavored, and but too successfully, to influence and mislead public opinion.

“7. Resolved, that Virginia will be found her own worst enemy, whenever she consents to number among her friends those who are never true to themselves but when they are false to their country.

“8. Resolved, that we owe it to justice, while denouncing the portentous combination between General Jackson and the late unhallowed coalition of his and our enemies, to acquit *Them* of any dereliction of principle, and to acknowledge that they have but acted in their vocation.

“9. Resolved, that we cannot consent to adopt principles which we have always disavowed, merely because they have been adopted by the President; and, although we believe that we shall be in a lean and proscribed minority, we are prepared again to take up our cross, confident of success under that banner, so long as we keep the faith, and can have access to the public ear.

“10. Resolved, that, while we utterly reprobate the doctrine of Nullification, as equally weak and mischievous, we cannot for that reason give our countenance to principles equally

unfounded, and in the highest degree dangerous to the liberties of the People.

“11. Resolved, that we highly approve of the mission of Benjamin Watkins Leigh, not only as in itself expedient and judicious, but as uniting upon the man the best qualified, whether for abilities, integrity, and principles, moral and political, beyond all others in the Commonwealth or in the United States, for the high, arduous, and delicate task which has been devolved upon him by the unanimous suffrage of the Assembly, and as we believe of the people.<sup>1</sup> (a)

“Signed

“JOHN RANDOLPH OF ROANOKE,  
“Chairman.”

The submission of the resolutions was followed by a powerful speech of Randolph's which was heard by two auditors whose impressions we shall bring forward in a later chapter of this book. On motion they were referred to a committee, consisting of the following gentlemen, whose family names, so strange to the eyes of many of our readers, and yet so familiar to every resident of Charlotte County, we recall, if for no other reason, because nothing could more convincingly establish than a little inquiry into the standing of these gentlemen would do how happy in many respects, most vital to the well-being of a Commonwealth, was any community in which the suffrage was limited to such a class of individuals as they represented: Col. Clement Carrington, Captain Thomas Pettus, Henry A. Watkins, William M. Watkins, Robert Morton, Samuel D. Morton, John Coleman, B. W. Lester, George Hannah, John Marshall, John Thomas, John H. Thomas, Henry Madison, Dr. Isaac Read, William B. Green, Joseph Friend, Edward B. Fowlkes, Matthew J. Williams, Samuel Venable, William Bacon, John Booth, Francis Barnes, William H. Dennis, Richard Venable, Jr., Joseph M. Daniel, Thomas F. Spencer, Paul Carrington,

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 190.

John Daniel, Charles Raine, Benjamin Marshall, Colonel Marshall, J. H. Marshall, Cornelius Barnes, Dr. Hoge, Dr. Bouldin, Elisha Hundley, Dr. Patillo, Dr. Edwin Price, Dr. Garden, Samuel Daniel, Winslow Robinson, Nicholas Edmunds, Major Gaines, R. I. Gaines, Henry Carrington, Edward W. Henry, Thomas T. Bouldin, James W. Bouldin, William B. Watkins, Anderson Morton, John Morton, Thomas A. Morton, Martin Hancock, D. B. Hancock, Clement Hancock, Colonel H. Spencer, G. C. Friend, Jacob Morton, Wyatt Cardwell, William Smith, Colonel Thomas Read, Thomas Read, Archibald A. Davidson, William T. Scott, Major Thomas Nelson, Isham Harvey, Dr. Joel Watkins, T. E. Watkins, Major Samuel Baldwin, Robert Carrington, and John Randolph of Roanoke.<sup>1</sup>

When Randolph, who was practically the Dictator of the occasion, was making up the committee, he exclaimed: “Call Col. Clem Carrington, the man who shed his blood at Eutaw—none of your drunken stagger-weeds of the court yard!” Col. Carrington came forward with his hat in his hand; but, when requested to endorse the resolutions, he promptly said: “I am for Jackson and the Union, Sir,” and retired.

“Mr. Green,” Randolph said, addressing Wm. B. Green, “I know you are dead shot against Jackson, and I appoint you one of the Committee.” Mr. Green replied: “I am also dead shot against Nullification”; but, after some explanations by Randolph, Green, to his lasting regret consented to serve upon the committee, as did several other dissidents who were brought over by Randolph in the same way.<sup>2</sup>

When appointed, the members of the committee organized with Capt. Henry A. Watkins in the chair, and with Winslow Robinson as Secretary. Capt. William M.

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 192.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 195.

Watkins then moved that the meeting adjourn to some future day, but the motion was lost; whereupon he withdrew from the committee; and the resolutions were adopted seriatim, with only a scattering opposition here and there to any of them.<sup>1</sup> (a)

Before they were adopted, however, a painful colloquy had taken place between Randolph and Captain William M. Watkins. Addressing himself to the Captain, Randolph declared that he did not "expect an old Yazoo speculator to approve of them." In reply, Watkins rose and denied that he was any such speculator; but Randolph, looking him steadily in the face pointed his long forefinger at him and said: "You are a Yazoo man, Mr. Watkins." Again, Capt. Watkins rose, agitated and embarrassed, and entered into some explanations; and again, with the same deliberation, Randolph simply repeated: "You are a Yazoo man, Mr. Watkins." A third time, Capt. Watkins rose, this time overwhelmed with chagrin and mortification; but, as he rose, it was only to face the same accusing finger and the same unrelenting indictment: "You are a Yazoo man"; and there was nothing for him to do except to retire from the meeting.<sup>2</sup>

Of the general impression created by Randolph on this occasion upon his audience, it is enough at this time to mention that, in concluding his report, Winslow Robinson says that, in responding to a final resolution of the meeting, thanking him for his open and decided support of the rights of the States and his strenuous and efficient opposition to the odious consolidating doctrine of the President's late proclamation, Mr. Randolph expressed his thanks in a speech of considerable length, in the course of which all the warmest sympathies which had so long united him to his old constituents seemed to be awakened; and that on the breaking up of the meeting they parted with

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 193.

<sup>2</sup>*Id.*, 197.

feelings such as no man besides had ever excited.<sup>1</sup> (a) Until recently, the fact seems to have been lost sight of that Randolph did go with his brother Beverley to Washington in the winter of 1832-33. They had an interview with Jackson, and, afterwards, were among the guests to whom he gave a dinner at the White House. So provoked, however, was Jackson by a certain article which appeared in the *Telegraph* at this time, and which he attributed to Randolph, that, when Beverley Tucker subsequently called at the White House, Jackson, supposing that Randolph was with him, sent word that he was too busy to see them.

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 193.

## CHAPTER II

### The End

In the succeeding April, Randolph endeavored to make a tour of the counties embraced in his former district. He had now formed the idea that exercise by what he called "gestation" was indispensable to his existence.<sup>1</sup> His body, however, had really grown too weak to flush his brain properly when he was speaking. Indeed, he had to give up one effort to reach Buckingham Court House and to return from Buckingham County to Charlotte Court House *re infecta* (as he said); and when he got to Charlotte Court House on this occasion, he was too knocked up by fatigue to keep on to Roanoke. He was present, however, at Cumberland Court House on election day in the month of April; and thence he proceeded directly northwards for the purpose of taking the packet, *Montezuma*, at Philadelphia for England.<sup>2</sup>

The first night of his journey, he spent at Clay Hill, the residence of his intimate friend, Barksdale, in Amelia County. Later, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough from Geo. W. Johnson's, near Moody's, in Chesterfield County:

"I am here very ill. I have little expectation of ever leaving this apartment except on men's shoulders; an act of imprudence on the night of my arrival has nearly sealed my doom. Yet, with my characteristic reaction, I may go to Petersburg tomorrow and on Monday to Richmond. Pray secure me, if

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 364.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

practicable, a parlor and bed-room adjoining on a lower floor, and speak to Ball to reserve stalls for 5 horses and 3 servants."<sup>1</sup>

The reaction did come, and enabled him to get to Petersburg where he not only attended the races, but even made a speech. Subsequently, he passed through Richmond (*a*), and from The Merry Oaks, beyond Richmond, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough in these words:

"Arrived here last night, through torrents of rain that deluged the roads, and made them run like rivers; John and Juba as wet as drowned rats, but it was an admirable *sedative* (you are an 'Embro' man, and possibly a disciple of Cullen) for John's over-stimulant. *Quant à moi*, I came every foot of the way in torture, having been so lumbered by John that I might as well have been in the pillory; and each jolt over stone, stump, or pole, or old fence rails left in the road, when the new one was made, or the old ones 'upset' for the benefit of travelling carriages, those of gentlemen in *especial*, as the Waverly man has it.

"At Botts's gate, Half Sink, I was fain to call and ask the price of his land, and sponge upon him for the night; for I was in agony, but he was gone to the Baltimore races. So, after making some better arrangements, and watering the tits which were half choked with thirst, I proceeded on over the slashes and 'cross ways,' with *peine forte et dure*, to the Old Oaks, ignorant until then that the stage road had been changed; or I would have taken the other, except on account of the house. If Botts's land lay in any other county, except Henrico and especially, if it were on the South Side, I would buy it, and take my chance for selling Spring Hill, which, except in point of soil, has every advantage over Half Sink."<sup>2</sup>

The distance between Merry Oaks and the Potomac was traversed so rapidly that Randolph reached the landing at Potomac Creek in advance of the other travellers who were transported thither by stage coaches from

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 364.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 365.



Fredericksburg. For his movements from this point to Philadelphia, where he died, we are indebted almost exclusively to information gathered by Garland in the preparation of his biography from sources no longer available to us except in his pages. This information, therefore, we shall lay before the reader in Garland's very words:

"When the approach of the boat was announced, he was brought out of the room by his servants, on a chair, and seated in the porch, where most of the stage passengers were assembled. His presence seemed to produce considerable restraint on the company; and, though he appeared to solicit it, none were willing to enter into conversation; one gentleman only, who was a former acquaintance, passed a few words with him; and, so soon as the boat reached the landing, all hurried off, and left him nearly alone, with his awkward servants as his only attendants. An Irish porter, who seemed to be very careless and awkward in his movements, slung a trunk around and struck Mr. Randolph with considerable force against the knee. He uttered an exclamation of great suffering. The poor Irishman was much terrified, and made the most humble apology, but Mr. Randolph stormed at him, would listen to no excuse, and drove him from his presence. This incident increased the speed of the bystanders, and, in a few minutes, not one was left to assist the dying man.

"Dr. Dunbar, an eminent physician, of Baltimore, witnessing what happened, and feeling his sympathies awakened towards a man so feeble, and apparently so near his end, walked up to the chair, as the servants were about to remove their master, and said: 'Mr. Randolph, I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance, but I have known your brother from my childhood; and I see you have no one with you but your servants—you appear to require a friend. I will be happy to render you any assistance in my power, while we are together on the boat.' He looked up, and fixed such a searching gaze on the doctor as he never encountered before. But, having no other motive but kindness for a suffering fellow-man, he returned the scrutinizing look with steadiness. As Mr. Randolph read the coun-

tenance of the stranger, who had thus unexpectedly proffered his friendship, his face suddenly cleared up, and, with a most winning smile and real politeness, and, with a touching tone of voice, grasping the Doctor's hand, he said, 'I am most thankful to you, Sir, for your kindness; for I do, indeed, want a friend.'

"He was now, with the Doctor's assistance, carefully carried on board, and set down in the most eligible part of the cabin. He seemed to be gasping for breath, as he sat up in the chair; having recovered a little, he turned to the Doctor, and said: 'Be so good, Sir, if you please, as to give me your name.' The Doctor gave him his name, his profession, and place of residence.

" 'Ah! Doctor,' said he, 'I am passed surgery—passed surgery!' 'I hope not, Sir,' the doctor replied. With a deeper and more pathetic tone, he repeated, '*I am passed surgery.*'

"He was removed to a side berth, and laid in a position where he could get air. The Doctor also commenced fanning him. His face was wrinkled, and of a parched yellow, like a female of advanced age. (a) He seemed to repose for a moment, but presently he roused himself, throwing round an intense and searching gaze. The Doctor was reading a newspaper.

" 'What paper is that, Doctor?'

" 'The—*Gazette*, Sir.'

" 'A very scurrilous paper, Sir—a very scurrilous paper.'

"After a short pause, he continued, 'Be so good, Sir, as to read the foreign news to me—the debates in Parliament, if you please.'

"As the names of the speakers were mentioned, he commented on each. 'Yes,' said he, 'I knew him when I was in England'; then went on to make characteristic remarks on each person.

"In reading, the Doctor fell upon the word budget; he pronounced the letter *u* short, as in *bud*—budget. Mr. Randolph said quickly, but with great mildness and courtesy, 'Permit me to interrupt you for a moment, Doctor; I would pronounce that word budget; like *oo* in book.' 'Very well, Sir,' said the Doctor pleasantly, and continued the reading; to which Mr.

Randolph listened with great attention. Mr. Randolph now commenced a conversation about his horses, which he seemed to enjoy very much; Gracchus particularly he spoke of with evident delight. As he lay in his berth, he showed his extremities to the Doctor which were much emaciated. He looked at them mournfully, and expressed his opinion of the hopelessness of his condition. The Doctor endeavored to cheer him with more hopeful views. He listened politely, but evidently derived no consolation from the remarks. Supper was now announced; the Captain and the Steward were very attentive in carrying such dishes to Mr. Randolph as they thought would be pleasing to him. He was plentifully supplied with fried clams; which he ate with a good deal of relish. The Steward asked him if he would have some more clams. 'I do not know,' he replied, 'Doctor, do you think I could take some more clams?' 'No, Mr. Randolph, had you asked me earlier, I would have advised you against taking any; for they are very injurious; but I did not conceive it my right to advise you.' 'Yes, you had, Doctor; and I would have been much obliged to you for doing so. Steward, I can't take any more; the Doctor thinks they are not good for me.'

"After the table was cleared off, one of the gentlemen, the one referred to as a former acquaintance of Mr. Randolph's, observed that he should like to get some information about the boats north of Baltimore. 'I can get it for you, Sir,' replied Mr. Randolph. 'Doctor do me the favor to hand me a little wicker-basket, among my things in the berth below.' The basket was handed to him; it was full of clippings from newspapers. He could not find the advertisement he sought for. The gentleman, with great politeness, said, 'Don't trouble yourself, Mr. Randolph.' Several times he repeated, 'Don't trouble yourself, Sir.' At length, Randolph became impatient, and, looking up at him with an angry expression of countenance, said: 'I do hate to be interrupted!' The gentleman, thus rebuked, immediately left him.

"Mr. Randolph then showed another basket of the same kind, filled with similar scraps from newspapers, and observed that he was always in the habit, when anything struck him in his reading as likely to be useful for future reference, to

cut it out and preserve it in books, which he had for that purpose; and that he had at home several volumes of that kind.

"He showed his arrangements for travelling in Europe; and, after a while, seeing the Doctor writing, he said, 'Doctor, I see you are writing; will you do me the favor to write a letter for me to a friend in Richmond?' 'Certainly, Sir.' 'The gentleman,' he continued, 'stands A. No. 1 among men—Dr. Brockenbrough, of Richmond.' The letter gave directions about business matters, principally, but it contained some characteristic remarks about his horses. He exulted in their having beaten the stage; and concluded, 'So much for blood.' 'Now,' said he, 'sign it, Doctor.'

" 'How shall I sign it, Mr. Randolph. Sign it John Randolph of Roanoke?'

" 'No, Sir, sign it Randolph of Roanoke.'

"It was done accordingly. 'Now, Doctor, said he, 'do me the favor to add a postscript.' The postscript was added: 'I have been so fortunate as to meet with Dr. — of —, on board this boat, and to form his acquaintance, and I can never be sufficiently grateful for his kind attentions to me.'

"So soon as the letter was concluded, Mr. Randolph drew together the curtains of his berth. The Doctor frequently heard him groaning heavily and breathing so laboriously that several times he approached the side of the berth to listen if it were not the beginning of the death-struggle. He often heard him also exclaiming, in agonized tones, 'Oh God! Oh Christ!'; while he was engaged in ejaculatory prayer.

"He now became very restless, was impatient and irascible with his servants, but continued to manifest the utmost kindness and courtesy towards Dr. Dunbar.

"When the boat reached the wharf at Alexandria, where the Doctor was to leave, he approached the side of the berth, and said, 'Mr. Randolph, I must now take leave of you.' He begged the Doctor to come and see him at Gadsby's; then, grasping his hand, he said, 'God bless you, Doctor; I never can forget your kind attentions to me.'"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 366-369.

During the preceding winter, when Randolph had visited Washington, a reconciliation had taken place between him and Henry Clay; from whom he had again become estranged after the duel. In a letter to his intimate friend, Judge Brooke, Clay told him just how this result was brought about.

"Observing him in the Senate one night," he said, "feeble, and looking as if he were not long for this world, and being myself engaged in a work of peace (the Ccmpromise Tariff), with corresponding feelings I shook hands with him. The salutation was cordial on both sides. I afterwards left a card at his lodgings, where I understand he has been confined by sickness."<sup>1</sup>

The next day after his arrival in Washington, Randolph went to the Senate chamber, and secured a seat just behind Clay, who happened at that time to be addressing the Senate. "Raise me up," said Randolph, "I want to hear that voice again." At the conclusion of the address, Randolph's presence was brought to Clay's attention, and Clay advanced towards him to speak to him; Randolph saying, as he approached, to a gentleman near himself, "Raise me up." Clay offered his hand, exclaiming: "Mr. Randolph, I hope you are better, Sir." "No, Sir," replied Randolph, "I am a dying man, and I came here expressly to have this interview with you."<sup>2</sup> They shook hands, and neither in enmity, nor in good will, were they ever to see each other again.

Randolph went on to Philadelphia, but, when he reached that city, a storm was raging, and the only carriage that John could obtain for him was a miserable hack with all its glasses broken. In this, he was driven through the storm from hotel to hotel in search of lodgings. At length, he was taken to the City Hotel, No. 41 N. Third

<sup>1</sup> *Life, etc., of Henry Clay*, by Calvin Colton, v. 2, 262.

<sup>2</sup> *Garland*, v. 2, 369.

St., kept by Edmund Badger. When Badger came out to meet him, he asked if he could be accommodated. Badger replied that his hotel was crowded but that he would do the best that he could for him. On hearing this, Randolph lifted up his hands and exclaimed: "Great God! I thank thee; I shall be among friends, and be taken care of."<sup>1</sup>

What happened from this time until his death four days later, we have been told in a series of highly interesting statements made by Dr. Josiah Parrish, a Quaker physician, of very high repute; his son, Dr. Isaac Parrish, his friend and former pupil, Dr. Francis West, a brother of Captain West, Randolph's sea-captain friend, and Condé Raguet, the editor of a State-Rights and Free Trade publication of the time.

Randolph arrived at Philadelphia on Monday, May 20, 1833. He was so ill that Badger suggested that he should send for a physician, and he was induced reluctantly to assent. After running over the names of seven or eight Philadelphia physicians, including Drs. Chapman and Physick, he said to Badger: "Well you have a Quaker doctor here of a good deal of celebrity—Dr. Parrish; go for him." He had heard of the Doctor through William B. Giles, who had been under his care at one time.

Dr. Parrish found Randolph much disturbed over the difficulty which he had experienced in obtaining lodgings, and so weak that he could scarcely expectorate; a fact which interfered distressingly with his respiration. He appeared fully conscious of his danger; informed the Doctor that he had attended several courses of lectures on anatomy; described his symptoms with professional accuracy, and declared that he must die unless he could expel the purulent matter which was oppressing him. Dr. Parrish asked him how long he had been sick. He replied: "Don't ask me that question; I have been sick all

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 370.

my life"; and, when the Doctor felt his pulse, he said: "You can form no judgment by my pulse; it is so peculiar." Realizing the sensitive nature of his patient, the Doctor cautiously remarked that Randolph had been an invalid so long that he must have acquired a correct knowledge of the general course of practice suited to his case; to which he answered: "Certainly, at 40 a fool or physician, you know." And when the Doctor observed that there were idiosyncracies in many constitutions, and proceeded to ascertain what was peculiar about his, he said: "I have been an idiosyncrasy all my life." "All preparations of camphor invariably injure me," he asserted. As to ether, it would blow him up; but that he was accustomed to the free use of opium in some form or other the Doctor soon learned. Indeed, on one occasion Randolph told Dr. Parrish either that he did or could take opium like a Turk.

In the course of the interview, Randolph introduced the subject of the Quakers, praising them in his characteristic way for their "neatness, economy, order, and comfort in everything." "Right in everything except politics," he affirmed, "There always twistical"; and, before the Doctor departed, Randolph repeated a part of the Episcopal Litany with apparent fervor. He felt so wretched that he requested Badger to remain with him all night; which Badger readily consented to do; but, in a few minutes, he asked him whether he had a wife, and, when Badger replied that he had, he said: "I'll not keep you from your wife; go home; go to your wife"; and Badger had to go.

The next morning, Dr. Parrish was aroused by a summons from his patient, and, when he called on him, Randolph apologized in handsome terms for sending for him, and, from that time on until he died, the Doctor attended him regularly. Ill as he was, the same day, with Badger as a companion, he was driven up Arch Street



as far as Broad and then down Chestnut Street as far as the United States Bank, where Nicholas Biddle, its president, came outside at his request, and conversed with him. As he went along with Badger, he pointed out various houses to him, and told him who occupied them when he was in Philadelphia as a member of Congress.

He was a trying patient. Several times, Dr. Parrish found it necessary to say to him that, while he felt every disposition to treat him with kindness and respect, he was not insensible to what was due to himself. Once when the Doctor proposed a medical consultation, leaving to Randolph the choice of the consulting physician, the latter assured the Doctor that he had entire confidence in him, but objected to the proposal with the remark: "In a multitude of counsel there is confusion; it leads to weakness and indecision; the patient may die while the doctors are staring at each other."

Dr. Parrish tells us that he found that, beneath Randolph's irritability, petulance, and impatience, there were some noble traits of character and a keen sense of propriety which awaited only the right sort of appeal to manifest itself. Once, when the Doctor suggested something for his relief, he pettishly but positively rejected the suggestion; but, when the Doctor renewed it, his good sense asserted its control; he apologized, and was as submissive as an infant. Whenever the Doctor parted with him, especially at night, he would receive the most affectionate acknowledgments from him; generally with the addition: "God bless you, He does bless you, and He will bless you!" One day he told Dr. Parrish that his poor John was worn down by fatigue and had been compelled to go to bed. Another person then took John's place, but he complained that, while this man was most attentive to him, neither he nor the Doctor were like John, who knew where to place his hand on anything in a large quantity of baggage prepared for an European voyage.



Randolph's breathing became so bad in consequence of obstructed expectoration that he requested the Doctor to perform the operation of tracheotomy on him; for he could not live, he said, unless relieved. So eager, however, as always, was his interest in all the concerns of life, that, at this same interview, he had a newspaper brought to him, looked it over, and, after pointing out to the Doctor a part of it, headed "Cherokee," asked the Doctor to read it. In reading, the Doctor pronounced the word "omnipotence" as if it were pronounced "omni-*po*-tence." Randolph checked him instantly, and pronounced the word as Walker pronounced it; and, when the Doctor attempted to defend himself, Randolph, without contradicting him, simply said quickly: "Pass on." Continuing his reading, the Doctor pronounced the word "impetus" as if its *e* were long. Again he was promptly corrected, and, when he hesitated about accepting the correction, he was told quickly as before: "There can be no doubt about it." When the Doctor ended and remarked that there was a great deal of sublimity in the composition, Randolph referred to the Mosaic account of creation and reciting, "Let there be light and there was light," observed: "There is sublimity!"

Even now the hope of getting off for Europe still lingered with him, and, when he found that he could not take the packet at Philadelphia, he formed the resolution of taking the packet at New York; and, when he found that his condition made even this impracticable, he decided that he would go on to New England to see Andrew Jackson, who was then in that portion of the United States.

The morning of the day that Randolph died, Dr. Parrish received an early and urgent message from him, begging him to call to see him. When the Doctor reached the sick room, there were several persons about Randolph; but they all soon left except John. Dr. Parrish remarked

to John that the latter had seen his master very low several times before, and yet he had revived, and that, perhaps, he would do so again; but Randolph interjected: "John knows better than that." The Doctor had not been long in the room when Randolph looked at him fixedly and announced. "I confirm every disposition in my will, especially that respecting my slaves, whom I have manumitted, and for whom I have made provision." Dr. Parrish assured him that he was rejoiced to hear him make such a statement, and soon afterwards, when he was about to leave the apartment for the purpose of calling on another patient, Randolph said in positive terms: "You must not go; you cannot; you shall not leave me"; calling to John as he uttered these words to take care that the Doctor did not leave the room. John obeyed by locking the door and reporting to his master: "Master, I have locked the door and got the key in my pocket. The Doctor cannot go now." So agitated was Randolph by this incident that he even said to the Doctor: "If you do go, you need not return." When the Doctor, however, appealed to his better feelings, reminding him of the duty that as a doctor he owed to another human being who might need his assistance, Randolph's manner instantly changed, and he said: "I retract that expression," and, perhaps, a quarter of an hour afterwards, giving the Doctor an expressive look, he again said: "I retract that expression." When the Doctor told him that he thought that he understood clearly his purpose in regard to his slaves, and took it for granted that the will would explain the matter fully, he replied under the influence of an hallucination:

"No, you do not understand it—I know you don't. Our laws are extremely particular on the subject of slaves. A will may manumit them, but provision for their subsequent support requires that a declaration be made in the presence of a

white witness, and it is requisite that the witness, after hearing the declaration, should continue with the party, and never lose sight of him until he is gone or dead. You are a good witness for John! You see the propriety and importance of your remaining with me! Your patients must make allowances for your situation."

Dr. Parrish, of course, knowing nothing of the laws of Virginia, felt the force of such reasoning. Randolph then said: "John told me this morning, 'Master, you are dying';" and the Doctor made no attempt to keep the truth from him. On the contrary, he assured Randolph that he would be entirely candid with him, and informed him that he had been rather surprised that he had lasted so long. Thereupon, Randolph made his preparations to die; John, obeying his directions as if everything had been thoroughly preconcerted between them. The gold stud, which had belonged to his father, was, agreeably with his command, placed in his shirt bosom by John, as we have mentioned in a previous chapter. At his request, a napkin was also placed upon his breast by John. For a short time, he lay perfectly quiet with his eyes closed, and Dr. Parrish thought that he was inclined to sleep; but suddenly he roused himself and exclaimed: "Remorse! Remorse!", uttering the word the second time at the top of his voice in a state of great excitement, and then crying out: "Let me see the word." Dr. Parrish thought it prudent to remain wholly silent. Randolph continued: "Get a dictionary—let me see the word." The Doctor looked about him and told Randolph that he believed that there was none in the room. "Write it down then," commanded Randolph. "Let me see the word." The Doctor picked up one of Randolph's cards from the table with the words "Randolph of Roanoke" on it, and asked whether he should write the word "Remorse" on that. "Yes, nothing more proper," replied Randolph. At this,

with his pencil, the Doctor wrote the word "Remorse" on the card, and Randolph took it into his hands hurriedly, and fastened his eyes on it with great intensity. "Remorse, you have no idea what it is—you can form no idea of it whatever; it has contributed to bring me to my present situation; but I have looked to the Lord Jesus Christ and hope I have obtained pardon." He then said: "Now let John take the pencil and draw a line under the word"; which was accordingly done. The Doctor asked what disposition was to be made of the card, and he replied: "Put it in your pocket and take care of it; when I am dead, look at it."

Realizing that testimony, originating in circumstances so extraordinary as those which surrounded him, might well be questioned, if Randolph's intentions in regard to his slaves were ever brought into dispute, Doctor Parrish suggested that some additional persons should be called in to hear the same declaration that Randolph had made to him, and to remain with Randolph until his death; and, when the Doctor proposed his son, Dr. Isaac Parrish, and his young friend and late pupil, Dr. Francis West, as the proper persons for the purpose, Randolph, as soon as he found that West was a brother of his sea-captain friend, exclaimed: "Send for him, he is the man; I will have him."

Before the door was unlocked, so as to allow of the exit of Dr. Parrish, Randolph pointed to a bureau, and asked the Doctor to take his remuneration for his services from it; but the Doctor objected, saying that he would feel as though he were acting indelicately, were he to comply. Without pressing the subject further, Randolph merely remarked: "In England, it is always customary."

Dr. Isaac Parrish and Dr. Francis West were sent for and soon arrived. When they entered the room, Randolph was sitting in bed, propped up with pillows, and, as he was very susceptible to cold, in his emaciated condition, his head had been covered with a blanket in the form of a

hood, crowned with an old hat. After the witnesses had been admitted, and he had shaken hands very cordially with Dr. West, and inquired after his brother, Randolph requested that Edmund Badger be sent for; and, as soon as Badger had come, he asked the three doctors—Dr. Joseph Parrish, Dr. Isaac Parrish, and Dr. Francis West—to gather around his bed; which they did in a semi-circle. Then he made the declaration that they were desired to attest.

“His whole soul,” says Dr. Joseph Parrish, “seemed concentrated in the act. His eyes flashed feeling and intelligence. Pointing towards us with his long index finger, he addressed us: ‘I confirm all the directions in my will respecting my slaves, and direct them to be enforced; particularly in regard to a provision for their support.’ ”

And at this point, raising his arm as high as he could, he brought his open hand down on the shoulder of John, who stood near him weeping; saying as he did so: “Especially for this man.” He then asked each of the doctors in turn whether they understood him, shooting out his long, historic forefinger at each as he made the inquiry, and obtained from each an affirmative reply.

After the declaration had been made, Dr. Parrish explained to Dr. Isaac Parrish and Dr. West the significance of the ceremony as it had been explained to him by Randolph, and appealed to Randolph to know whether he had made a correct statement. “Yes,” replied Randolph, gracefully dismissing the group with a wave of his hand, and adding: “The young gentlemen will remain with me.”

“I took leave,” Dr. Joseph Parrish tells us, “with the assurance that I would return as speedily as possible and remain with him. After an absence of perhaps an hour or more, and about 50 minutes before his death, I returned to his sick-room. But now the scene was changed; his keen, penetrating

eye had lost its expression; his powerful mind had given way, and he appeared totally incapable of giving any correct directions relative to his worldly concerns."

Other information about the last moments of Randolph's life has been given to us by Dr. Francis West and Condé Raguet. In the course of the morning, his friends William J. Barksdale, Henry A. Watkins, and John S. Barbour called to see him. "They can do no harm or good," he said, "let them come up."

For some time, after the witnesses had been called in, his mind continued wholly clear; but then began to give way quite rapidly. He was very restless, and exhibited considerable impatience when his wishes were not speedily gratified. One moment, he would ask that the fire be replenished, and, another, that fresh air be let into the apartment. Once or twice, his eyes were cheated by illusions. He attempted to scribble a letter to Judge Coalter, who, he said, was living just over the way. The old sensual visions, which he had seen the year before at Roanoke, came back, and yet his innate sense of modesty once manifested itself so strongly as to excite the attention of Dr. Francis West. At times, he was so fearful of suffocation that he begged Dr. Francis West, as he had begged Dr. Joseph Parrish, to perform the operation of tracheotomy on him, and, when Dr. West declined to perform it, even called for a knife with which to perform it himself. "The old Doctor," he said, "was too timid to do it, and so were the young ones." Finally, his desires could hardly be apprehended, so indistinctly were they now expressed either by word or gesture. His breathing gradually became shorter; his knees, which had been slightly elevated, as he sat in bed, fell to one side; there was a slight facial contortion, his spirit forsook its wasted habitation, and its flight was so natural that it was difficult to say just when it departed. Fifteen minutes to twelve

o'clock, midday, on Friday, May 24, 1833, is the moment to which the event was referred by Dr. Joseph Parrish. (a).

Shortly after Randolph attempted to write his letter to Judge Coalter, he fumbled away at another note, and handed it to Condry Raguet, who was also present when he died, and asked him to send it to Chatham, Virginia. It was addressed to his beloved niece, Mrs. John Randolph Bryan, and her husband, and, so far as its wandering thoughts are decipherable, it reads as follows:

"Dying. Home. . . . Randolph and Betty, my children, adieu! Get me to bed at Chatham or elsewhere, say Hugh Mercer's or Minor's. To bed I conjure you all."

Even with Azrael darkening his doorway, he was still travelling the long and arduous road between Washington and Roanoke.<sup>1</sup>

After Randolph's death, his body was exposed to public view at the City Hotel; and was inspected by a great concourse of people; (b) and, on May 25, a public meeting of the citizens of Philadelphia was convoked in the Court Room of the United States District Court in that City for the purpose of paying a tribute of respect to his memory. The gathering was addressed by the celebrated lawyers, Horace Binney and John Sergeant.<sup>2</sup> Appropriately enough, the body, after being brought by water to Baltimore, was conveyed to Norfolk in the steamboat, *Pocohontas*, and from Norfolk to Richmond in the steamboat,

<sup>1</sup> Deposition of Dr. Jos. Parrish, Littell's *Living Age*, No. 180; 153, Oct. 23, 1847; Depositions of Drs. Isaac Parrish and Francis West and Edmund Badger in *Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor.*, Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.; Last Moments of Mr. Randolph, by Condry Raguet in *Examiner and Journal of Political Economy*, Phila., 1834, v. 1, 45-47; *Reminiscences of the Last Moments of Hon. J. R. of Roanoke*, by Dr. Francis West, copied by D. Grinnan, on Sept. 27, 1887, from original MS. in possession of Dr. Philip Slaughter, of Culpeper Co., Va. (J. C. Grinnan MSS.); Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *U. S. Gazette*, May 27, 1833; Poulson's *Am. Daily Advertiser*, May 29, 1833.



*Patrick Henry.* It arrived in Richmond on May 28, and the next day, after a funeral service, it was taken to Roanoke. Thirteen minute guns were fired when the funeral cortège commenced the journey from Richmond, and a great multitude of people followed it as far as the toll-gate on Mayo's Bridge.<sup>1</sup> When the body arrived at Roanoke, it was buried under a tall pine in a spot not more than one hundred and fifty feet from the front door of one of the two dwellings which constituted Randolph's home, and, in accordance with his directions, his grave was marked only by a rude stone from his plantation which he had selected for the purpose.

In December, 1879, all the vestiges of him that time had spared were gathered up by John Randolph Bryan and his son, Joseph Bryan, and interred in Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond.<sup>2</sup> Two persons, who were present at the disinterment, Dennis E. Morgan and Henry E. Edmunds, had been present at the interment. So deep was the grave, in which Randolph was buried, that, for a time, after the work of exhumation had been diligently prosecuted, it looked as if the search for the body might be a wholly disappointing one; and, when it was discovered, true to the local tradition which had always prevailed in the neighborhood of Roanoke, it was found that Randolph had been interred, not with his face to the East, as was customary, but to the West; so, it was said, that he might still keep an eye, even after death, on Henry Clay. In a letter to the author,<sup>3</sup> Mr. Briscoe B. Bouldin, one of the persons present at the disinterment, tells him that, when the interior of the coffin was exposed, the outlines of the figure could be plainly seen, though there was only black dust to mark them. The hair, that irrepressible appendage of our mortal being, seemed natural,

<sup>1</sup> *Id.*, May 28, 1833, *Richmond Whig*, May 29, 1833.

<sup>2</sup> *Richmond Dispatch*, Dec. 12, 1879.

<sup>3</sup> Jan. 2, 1919.



Mr. Bouldin says. Another eye-witness told Mr. J. H. Whitty, the well-known editor of Poe's poems, that the root of a tree had penetrated the skull.<sup>1</sup> Death had not only stricken him down but had insultingly trampled upon him. (*a*)

<sup>1</sup> Letter from J. H. Whitty to the Author, Sept. 17, 1918.

## CHAPTER III

### **The Randolph Will Litigation**

After Randolph's death it was found that he had made various dispositions of his property by will at different times. One will was executed in 1819 and placed in the custody of Dr. Brockenbrough; it contained this declaration:

“I give my slaves their freedom to which my conscience tells me they are justly entitled. It has a long time been a matter of the deepest regret to me that the circumstances under which I inherited them, and the obstacles thrown in the way by the law of the land have prevented my emancipating them in my lifetime, which it is my full intention to do, in case I can accomplish it.”

Then ensued provisions settling all the estate of the testator, with certain exceptions, upon William Leigh, William Meade, and Francis Scott Key, in trust to use it in colonizing the slaves of the testator on a body of land, not in excess of four thousand acres, to be purchased by them in some part of the United States; defraying the expense of removing them; and supplying them with cabins, clothes, and utensils.<sup>1</sup>

Another will, without date, was executed in 1821, and to this four codicils were subsequently added; dated, Dec. 5, 1821, Jan. 31, 1826, May 6, 1828, and Aug. 26, 1831, respectively. Still another will was executed in January, 1832.

By the will of 1821, Randolph made Wm. Leigh his executor, and devised to him the part of his Roanoke

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 150.

estate which he called his Middle Quarter; bequeathing to him at the same time all his household effects, live-stock, tools, and the like. In the same will, he bequeathed freedom to all his slaves in the following terms: "I give and bequeath all my slaves their freedom, heartily regretting that I have ever been the owner of one." Moreover, he bequeathed to his executor a sum not in excess of \$8,000, or so much of such a sum as might be necessary, with which "to transport and settle said slaves to and in some other State or Territory of the United States, giving to all above the age of 40 not less than 10 acres of land." Provision was also made by the will for the sale of the remainder of his Roanoke estate, and of his Bushy Forest estate, in Charlotte County, and for the disposition of the proceeds of sale by Francis Scott Key and the Rev. Wm. Meade towards bettering the condition of the manumitted slaves of the testator (to use his words). In this will, Randolph also expressed the hope that his "old and faithful servants," Essex and Essex's wife, Hetty, might be suffered to remain in the State; and to each of them he made an annual bequest of 3½ barrels of corn, two hundred-weight of pork, a pair of strong shoes, a suit of clothes, and a blanket; and to Essex besides an annual bequest of a hat, 10 pounds of coffee, and 20 pounds of brown sugar; and to his servants Nancy, the daughter of Hetty, Juba (alias Jupiter), Queen, and Johnny, his body servant, the same annual allowance as to Hetty.

By the codicil executed by Randolph in 1826, these provisions were so modified as to place John, who was a son of Essex, and Juba on the same footing as Essex and John's wife, Betsy, and Juba's wife, Celia, and Nancy, on the same footing as Hetty; and, after making these changes, Randolph said:

"And I humbly request the General Assembly (the only request I ever preferred to them) to let the above named, and

such other of my old and faithful slaves as desire it, remain in Virginia, recommending them each and all to the care of my said executor, who I know is too wise, just, and humane to send them to Liberia, or any other place in Africa, or the West Indies."

There were some other special bequests contained in the will of 1821, but they were all revoked by the codicil of 1826, except a bequest to Theodore Dudley, which had been previously revoked by the codicil of 1821. In addition to revoking the bequest to Dr. Dudley, the codicil of 1821 atoned for the lack of a residuary clause in the will of 1821 by giving to the executor of the testator, Wm. Leigh, all the lots and houses of the testator in Farmville, and every other species of property whatever, of which he might die possessed, save such property as was disposed of in the will of 1821.

By the codicil of 1826, Randolph also specifically devised to Wm. Leigh a tract of land in Charlotte County which he had bought from the estate of Pleasant Lipscomb, and a 53-acre tract of land in Halifax County, "lying at the deep gut on Staunton River," which he had bought from William Sims Daniel. Both tracts had been purchased since the execution of the will in 1821; and, by the codicil of 1826, Randolph also devised to Wm. Leigh an 175-acre tract of land in Halifax County, which he had likewise bought from William Sims Daniel, to be held by him during his life, and, at his decease, to pass to such one of Leigh's children as he should make by his will the devisee of the 53-acre Daniel tract. By the same codicil, Randolph devised to Thomas H. Benton all that part, consisting of about 600 acres, of the Bushy Forest tract that he had set apart for the benefit of his slaves in the will of 1821, which lay on the S. E. side of the Little Roanoke; and, at the same time, he bequeathed to Benton his large pistols made by Woydon and Burton. In the same codicil, the subjects of such bequests in the will of

1821 as were revoked by it he bequeathed to his executor as a fund to be used at his discretion for the benefit of the testator's slaves; the surplus, if any, to belong to him. The codicil of 1826 also made various specific bequests to some of Randolph's friends, which modified to a limited extent the general residuary dispositions which he had made in favor of Wm. Leigh.

By the codicil of 1828, Randolph revoked all testamentary dispositions, if any, made by him after the execution of the will of 1821, whether made by will or codicil; but an "N. B." to the instrument contained a clause of specific devise saving to Wm. Leigh the Pleasant Lipscomb and the two Daniel tracts, and all the property of every description which the testator had acquired since the date of the will of 1821. Curiously enough, another addendum to this codicil referred to his Ferry Quarter, which had by the will of 1821 been directed to be sold for the improvement of the condition of his manumitted slaves, as having been made subject by that will to the refusal of Wm. Leigh at a price, he said, which he then thought very moderate, but which a change in the times had rendered too high to answer his friendly intentions towards his executor in giving him the refusal; so he modified the will of 1821, he declared, so far, but so far only, as to reduce to the extent of 50% the price at which Leigh might take all the land above the Ferry Road that Randolph had inherited from his father, and all that he had bought from John Daniel, Tom. Beasley, Charles Beasley, and others of that name and family. Such a misapprehension of the terms of his own will was, of course, well calculated to give color to the idea that Randolph was in an irresponsible condition of mind when he made this codicil.

By the codicil of 1831, executed in London, Randolph devised to his niece his Lower Quarter and some additional land; and to his brother, Henry St. George Tucker, his Bushy Forest estate, on both sides of the Little Roanoke,

and all his interest in the estate of Mrs. Martha Corran, the widow of his Uncle Col. Theodorick Bland, and in his lots and houses in Farmville. By this codicil, he also bequeathed his plate and library to his niece. The codicil likewise stated that the testator had upwards of 2,000 pounds sterling in the hands of Baring Bros. & Co. of London, and upwards of 1,000 pounds sterling in the hands of Gowan & Marx, and that this money he left to his executor, Wm. Leigh, as a fund for carrying into execution the provisions of his will relating to his slaves. It also contained this provision:

“And, in addition to the provision which I have made for my faithful servant *John*, sometimes called *John White*, I charge my whole estate with an annuity to him during his life of \$50.00, and, as the only favor, that I ever asked of any Government, I do entreat the Assembly of Virginia to permit the said John and his family to remain in Virginia; and I do earnestly recommend him and them to my executor aforesaid, and to my dear brother and niece aforesaid.”

The reader cannot fail to have noted, we are sure, the persistency with which Randolph's wish to free his slaves and to provide for their support continued from the date of his will in 1819 to the date of his last codicil in 1831—a period of some 12 years.

After his return from Russia, however, madness worked a complete reversal for a time in the current of his feelings in this respect. In January, 1832, he endeavored to execute another will revoking all former testamentary dispositions made by him, appointing Wm. Leigh and his brother, Henry St. George Tucker, his executors, and requiring them to sell all of his slaves and other personal or perishable property, with certain exceptions, including 100 of his slaves, to be selected by his executors, and to invest the proceeds in stock of the bank of the United States; and, in default of there being no such bank (which

might God grant for the safety of their liberties), in the *English* 3% consols; and, in case of there being no such stocks (which also might God grant for the safety of old England), then in the United States 3% stock; or, in defect of such stock, in mortgages on land in England. By this paper, Randolph further bequeathed to Wm. Leigh and Henry St. George Tucker so much of the sum of \$20,000, which he then had in the bank of Virginia, as might remain after payment had been made for certain land just purchased by him from Elisha E. Hundley; and upon his Bushy Forest estate, which he directed in the will to be sold and made chargeable with such debts and legacies as thereafter he might see fit to give when he should have more leisure to make his will, he charged a legacy of \$5,000 in favor of John Randolph Leigh, the youngest son of Wm. Leigh. By this will, he likewise bequeathed to Dr. Brockenbrough, John Wickham, Nathaniel Macon, Henry St. George Tucker, and Wm. Leigh certain specific articles even more valuable from the *pretium affectionis* that attached to them than because of their intrinsic worth. And the residue of his estate of every kind he gave to John C. Bryan, the only son of his niece, during his life, with remainder to his eldest son in fee simple; and, in defect of such issue, then to the son of Henry St. George Tucker, called John Randolph after the testator, during his life, with remainder to his eldest son; and, in defect of such issue, then to Tudor Tucker, the brother of John Randolph Tucker, during his natural life, with remainder to his eldest son.

At the July term of the General Court of Virginia, in the year 1834, John Coalter, as the next friend of John Coalter Bryan, the residuary legatee under the will of 1832, presented that will to the court for probate. The application was opposed by Rev. Wm. Meade, as trustee for the slaves under the will of 1821, and by Frederick Hobson, as the Committee of John St. George Randolph, John

Randolph's insane nephew; on the ground that John Randolph was insane at the time of the execution of the paper. During the progress of the trial, Wm. Leigh, having, with a degree of unselfishness such as has rarely ennobled human conduct, released all his interest under the will of 1821 and the codicils thereto, so as to qualify himself as a witness for the purpose of upholding the still richer gift of liberty that Randolph had bequeathed to his slaves, was examined as a witness by Meade; and, his testimony being reduced to writing, was made a part of the record of the court. The General Court admitted the will to probate, but, on appeal to the Court of Appeals of Virginia, this judgment was reversed, and the will of 1832 was declared to be null and void.

After this decision of the Court of Appeals of Virginia, Wm. Meade presented to the General Court at its July term in 1836 for probate the will of 1821 and its four codicils. The application was opposed by Hobson, as the Committee of John St. George Randolph, who claimed that all four of these testamentary papers were invalid; and by Henry St. George Tucker and John Randolph Bryan and his wife, so far as the will of 1821 and its first three codicils were concerned; but by these last defendants, it was claimed that its fourth codicil (that of 1831) was maintainable as an independent testamentary paper. The grounds on which Hobson, as Committee, impugned the validity of the will of 1821 and all of its four codicils, and on which the other defendants impugned the validity of the will of 1821 and its first three codicils, were that the testator was insane at the time of the execution of the several papers, and that, besides, the will of 1821 had been cancelled. On this trial, by consent of the parties, the testimony taken on the application to admit to probate the will of 1832, including that of Wm. Leigh, was used, and the General Court reached the conclusion that John Randolph was sane when he executed the testamentary



papers offered for probate, and that he was insane when he cancelled the will of 1821. The Court, accordingly, entered up a judgment admitting the will of 1821 and its four codicils to probate, and, upon appeal to the Court of Appeals, this judgment was affirmed.

Thereupon, Wm. Leigh, the executor, named in the will of 1821, qualified as such in the General Court in December, 1837, and settled two administration accounts before a Commissioner of the Court, by which a large amount of assets was shown to be in his hands ready for distribution. Immediately after the qualification of Wm. Leigh as executor, Nathaniel Beverley Tucker, Randolph's brother, and St. George T. Coalter, his nephew, filed a Bill in Chancery in the Circuit Superior Court for the County of James City, in the City of Williamsburg, against Wm. Leigh, as executor, and Francis Scott Key and Wm. Meade, as trustees for the emancipated slaves and the plaintiff's coheirs and co-distributees, John St. George Randolph, Henry St. George Tucker, and John Randolph Bryan and wife, praying, among other things, that Wm. Leigh, as executor, might be enjoined from carrying into effect any of the provisions of the will of 1821 and its four codicils; (all of which, the bill alleged, were invalid because of the lack of mental capacity in the testator) in relation to the slaves, and from removing them out of the Commonwealth. This case went off on technical grounds.

In 1840, St. George Tucker Coalter having died, leaving a widow and five infant children, Corbin Braxton, as his executor and the next friend of his infant children, and the widow filed their Bill in the same court in the City of Williamsburg, asking that the validity of the will of 1821 and its four codicils might be passed upon by a jury. An answer to the Bill was filed by Wm. Leigh, as executor, and later the case was removed to the Circuit Superior Court of Law and Chancery of the Town of Petersburg. Subsequently, Nathaniel Beverley Tucker, by agreement

of the parties, became a plaintiff in the case, and, with the original plaintiffs, filed an amended Bill in it, renewing substantially the same objections to the papers that had been made to them in the beginning of the controversy. After some preliminary sparring on a formal point, which did not stop short of the Court of Appeals of Virginia, the case was submitted to a jury, which, on Feb. 11, 1845, found that the will of 1821 and its codicil of Dec. 5, 1821, were "the only true last will and testament of John Randolph." It would seem, however, from a petition for a fee for his services in the case, which was filed by H. L. Brooke, one of the counsel for Hobson, the Committee of St. George Randolph in the case, in another case, that this verdict was entered up as the result of a compromise between the parties, which the petition says: "while it gave the slaves their freedom and \$30,000, secured to St. George Randolph's estate a property valued at more than \$50,000." Thus ended the celebrated Randolph will litigation in which Walter Jones and Chapman Johnson, two of the most famous lawyers in the history of Virginia, and other eminent lawyers were at one time or another engaged.<sup>1</sup>

For some reason, the decisions of the Court of Appeals in the two probate proceedings, which were instituted before the General Court, were not reported along with the reports of other cases decided by the Court of Appeals of Virginia; and all the records of the General Court itself were unfortunately destroyed by the great fire which befell Richmond at the close of the Civil War. It would seem, too, that, in some unaccountable manner, all the papers in the case in the Superior Court of Law and Chancery for the Town of Petersburg, in which Wm.

<sup>1</sup> Randolph's Exor. *vs.* Tucker, 37 Va. (10 Leigh) 655; Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Bryan, 42 Va. (1 Grattan) 18; Randolph's Admr. *vs.* Hobson, Va. State Libr., p. 138; Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor., Clerk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

Leigh, as executor of John Randolph, settled up and distributed his estate, have become mislaid or lost.

Even if the jury did nothing more than register the result of the compromise arrived at by the parties in the case, the fact remains that the members of the Court of Appeals of Virginia not only declared the will of 1832, by which Randolph directed his slaves to be sold, to be invalid, but declared the will of 1821, by which he gave freedom to them all, to be valid. We are also told by Dr. James Waddell Alexander that, while the will litigation was pending, everybody in Charlotte County considered it highly inequitable that Randolph's slaves should be kept from the benefits intended by their master.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the human sense of duty has rarely found finer expression than it did in the utterances of the Rev. Wm. Meade and Judge Wm. Leigh in regard to the moral obligations imposed upon them by the testamentary dispositions of John Randolph. Writing to John Randolph Clay a few months after the death of Randolph, Judge Leigh said:

"I am named an executor in all his testamentary papers, and in all a legatee; but in the last not to any great amount. He left his affairs in such a situation that I had the temptation of a great estate to draw me into litigation with his relations; but, thank God, I have been able to resist it."<sup>2</sup>

"This defendant," Judge Leigh averred in his separate answer to the bill in the Petersburg case, "is defending the right to freedom of between 300 and 400 human beings and their descendants forever, who he most conscientiously believes are justly and legally entitled to their freedom."<sup>3</sup>

Not less resonant are the words used by the Rev. Wm. Meade, who by the way was the author of one of the

<sup>1</sup> Charlotte C. H., Va., Oct. 19, 1838, *40 Yrs. Familiar Letters*, p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> Halifax, Nov. 22, 1833, J. R. Clay Papers, Libr. Cong.

<sup>3</sup> *Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor.*, Cl'k's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

fairest summaries of the weakness and strength of slave institutions, of which we have any knowledge,<sup>1</sup> in his separate answer, as one of the trustees for Randolph's slaves, to the same bill:

"This respondent . . . being himself clear of all interest in this case but the sacred trust which has devolved on him in a capacity purely fiduciary of asserting the liberty and rights of very many and very helpless fellow creatures committed to his guardianship and protection by what he verily in his conscience believes to be the true and genuine last will and testament, the judicially established last will and testament, of a deceased friend; who, in that instrument, in so far as it concerns those fellow creatures, expressed intents which, equally in his dying hour as for many of the latter and most rational years of his life, interested his heart and his conscience far above all other of his earthly concerns; a solemn duty calls this respondent, under these circumstances, to protest, as he does now protest, as well for himself as for and in behalf of his co-defendant and co-trustee, F. S. Key, and of the said emancipated negroes, against further procedure in this cause before this court and the now judge thereof."<sup>2</sup>

In the light of such facts as these, what language can we find strong enough to fitly condemn the shallow bigotry, the benighted ignorance that did not, or would not, or could not, know the whole truth about human slavery in Virginia, and impelled Henry Adams in his *John Randolph* to say sneeringly that it was difficult to understand how the jury could possibly have held the will of 1821, which emancipated Randolph's slaves, to be a saner document than that of 1832 which did not?<sup>3</sup>

In 1833, the people of Virginia were not entirely ripe, though ripening fast, as the great debate over slavery in

<sup>1</sup> *Old Families and Churches of Va.*, v. 1, 90 (note) (Phila., 1910).

<sup>2</sup> *Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor.*, Cl'k's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>3</sup> P. 305.

the Virginia Assembly of 1832 showed, for the voluntary adoption of the system of gradual but universal emancipation, which, at this day, at any rate, it is reasonable to believe, would, in the ordinary course of human events, after the usual stages of agitation and reaction through which every great political issue passes in a democratic community, have been adopted by them, without the loss of a life on the battlefield, if only the question of freedom for the negro could have been kept entirely exempt from external complications; which, of course, under the circumstances was impossible; but, in 1833, public sentiment in Virginia against the institution of slavery was sufficiently pronounced to allow neither judge nor jury any pretext for thwarting the desire of a testator to confer the boon of liberty upon his slaves. Be this as it may, there was little disposition at that time on the part of some of the very free States, which were busily assailing the character and motives of Virginia, and kindling the spark of servile insurrection in her bosom, to second her in her efforts to rid herself of the cancer that Randolph told her sharply stood out from her very face.

Speaking of the efforts of Judge Leigh in 1846 to find a home for Randolph's emancipated slaves on 3200 acres of land, which he had purchased for them in Mercer County, Ohio, Henry Howe says:

"These arrived in the summer of 1846 to the number of about 400, but were forcibly prevented from making a settlement by a portion of the inhabitants of the County. Since then, acts of hostility have been commenced against the people of this settlement; and threats of greater held out if they do not abandon their lands and homes."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Collections of Ohio*, v. 2, p. 505.

## CHAPTER IV

### Randolph as a Parliamentary Orator

In his *John Randolph*, Henry Adams says of Randolph: "Neither his oratory nor his wit would have been tolerated in a Northern State."<sup>1</sup> This conception had its origin simply in the womb of prejudice. Indeed, we doubt whether any real assent accompanied it in the mind of Henry Adams, superficial as his knowledge of Randolph was at the time at which it was expressed. There was too much general education and literary culture in the Northern States, especially the New England States, for such gifts as those of Randolph not to be highly appreciated by their inhabitants. In point of fact, some of the most impressive testimony to his intellectual powers that has come down to us is that of Northern men. Speaking in his journal, under date of May 16, 1826, of a stage journey from Richmond to the Potomac which he had just taken in company with Randolph, Jared Sparks, of Massachusetts, certainly no mean authority, says:

"That strange, eccentric being, John Randolph was in company. He talked all day; his memory is prodigious, he touched upon all subjects—literature, politics, theology, history with quotations innumerable from the Latin and English classics. His mind is a storehouse filled to overflowing. He was in good humor and high spirits nearly all day, and, as there was but one gentleman besides myself in the stage, his conversation was carried on almost entirely with me.

<sup>1</sup> P. 255.

My task was not a hard one, however, as he talked incessantly; and, indeed, if his conversation were printed, it would be quite as entertaining, profound, and versatile as his speeches during the present session in the Senate."<sup>1</sup>

S. G. Goodrich, of Connecticut, better known under his *nom de plume* of Peter Parley, pronounces Randolph in his widely read *Memoirs* to have been undoubtedly a man of genius.<sup>2</sup> He also says that Randolph "sometimes seemed almost inspired."<sup>3</sup> The unfailingly readable James Par-ton, of Massachusetts, also pronounces Randolph to have been a man of genius.<sup>4</sup> And so does George Ticknor Curtis, of Massachusetts, the biographer of Daniel Webster. (a)<sup>5</sup>

"I had two opportunities of listening to Mr. Randolph in the Senate," Josiah Quincy the younger, of Massachusetts, informs us in his delightful *Figures of the Past*, "and was completely fascinated by his extraordinary gifts as a talker; for it was not oratory (though at times he would produce great oratorical effects) so much as elevated conversation that he poured forth."<sup>6</sup>

On Jan. 8, 1820, Edward Dowse, a member of Congress from Massachusetts, wrote to his wife: "I wish you could be present sometimes and hear John Randolph's wit. It is the most delicate and at the same time keenest."<sup>7</sup> And, if it is not too much like seething a kid in its mother's or its great-grandmother's milk, we might also record what Henry Adams' great-grandfather, John Adams, we need not add "of Massachusetts," had to say about Randolph's wit and eloquence in his review of a pamphlet published

<sup>1</sup> *Life & Writings of Jared Sparks*, by Herbert B. Adams, v. 1, 459.

<sup>2</sup> *Recollections of a Lifetime*, 774 (note).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Famous Americans of Recent Times*, 181.

<sup>5</sup> *Life of Daniel Webster*, by Geo. T. Curtis, v. 1, 146.

<sup>6</sup> P. 219.

<sup>7</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 387.

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in 1808 by James Hillhouse, a member of the United States Senate from Connecticut:

“Mr. John Randolph inherited his name, family connections, his fine plantations and thousand negroes, which have given him more power in this country than the Duke of Bedford has in England, and more than he would have, if he possessed all the brilliant wit, fine imagination and flowing eloquence of that celebrated Virginian.”<sup>1</sup>

Among Randolph's warmest admirers, was no less an arbiter of wit and eloquence than our American Addison, Washington Irving, of New York. A copy, which he had taken of the portrait of Randolph, painted by J. W. Jarvis, hangs upon the walls of the New York Historical Society today. Another admirer of Randolph was Harmanus Bleecker, of Albany, who served in Congress with him; and to his generosity the State of Virginia is indebted for a portrait of Randolph which is now in its Library at Richmond. Whoever saw a school reader or an anthology of American eloquence, compiled by a Northern hand, and published by a Northern publishing house that did not contain selections from Randolph's most famous speeches, along with selections from the most renowned orations of Webster or Edward Everett? (a) And who was it but the “good gray poet” of New England, John Greenleaf Whittier, who wrote the stirring lines on Randolph so full of tender reverence for his genius, including his mirth, “sparkling like a diamond shower,” which Dr. Charles W. Eliot, one of the living exemplars of all that is best in the New England intellect and character, has inserted in the Harvard Classics? The truth of the case is well summarized by Thos. H. Benton,<sup>2</sup> “Wit and genius *all* allowed him.” But why waste ink in refutation of malice so alien to the truth that it might be

<sup>1</sup> *The Life, &c., of John Adams*, Ed. by Chas. F. Adams, v. 6, 529.

<sup>2</sup> *30 Yrs. View*, v. 1, 473.



dismissed as puerility, if hatred of Randolph were not one of the heirlooms of the Adams family, as well as other much nobler things. If we except some intervals during his term of service in the United States Senate, when his mind was unquestionably unhinged, it may well be doubted whether any American orator ever commanded the undivided attention of his listeners more completely than Randolph; and, when we assert this, we do not forget that once, when describing the transport excited by the eloquence of Henry, he, himself, said that, when Henry was speaking, one felt like whispering to his neighbor, "Hush! don't stir, don't speak, don't breathe";<sup>1</sup> nor do we forget Webster "whose look," if we may follow in the footsteps of Milton and Rufus Choate,

"Drew audience still as night  
Or summer's noon-tide air."

Mixed with the intentness with which Randolph was heard was of course the curiosity which was concerned rather with his plantation background and the singularities of his physical appearance, dress, and manner than with his rhetorical talents; but curiosity of this sort, after all, can account for but a few minutes of arrested attention; not for the hours during which Randolph's auditors not infrequently surrendered themselves completely to the enchanting flow of his fresh and sparkling elocution. "He was listened to with undivided attention," we are told by Sawyer, who was one of his Congressional associates for many years.<sup>2</sup>

"It is unquestionably his praise," declares Hugh Blair Grigsby, who sat with him in the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829-30, "that above all his contemporaries, he was successful in fixing the attention of his audience of every class and degree throughout his longest speeches."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>2</sup> P. 123.

<sup>3</sup> *The Va. Convention of 1829-30*, by Grigsby, 45.

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"There is no speaker in either House that excites such universal attention as Jack Randolph," Washington Irving wrote to William Irving on one occasion.<sup>1</sup> "He drew an attentive audience together in Congress more certainly than any other speaker," was the statement of the *National Portrait Gallery*.<sup>2</sup>

"His genius and oratorical powers, language, voice and gesture cause him to be listened to as perhaps no other man was ever listened to in Congress," is the testimony of George R. Gilmer, a member of Congress, in a letter to his wife written in 1822.<sup>3</sup> "He attracted a crowded gallery," says James Buchanan, who was in the House for a time with him, "when it was known he would address the House, and always commanded the undivided attention of his whole audience."<sup>4</sup>

"When he began to speak," wrote Phœbe Morris from Washington to her father, Anthony Morris, of Philadelphia, in 1812, "what a silence reigned throughout the House! Everyone appeared to wait in anxious, almost breathless, expectation as if to catch the first sound of his voice, and what a voice! Clear, melodious, and penetrating, it fascinates."<sup>5</sup>

Most striking of all perhaps is what Horace Binney, the celebrated advocate, had to say on the subject at the memorial meeting in honor of Randolph held in Philadelphia immediately after his death:

"He has probably spoken to more listeners than any other man of his day; having been unrivalled in the power of riveting the attention by the force and pungency of his language, the facility and beauty of his enunciation, and the point and emphasis of his most striking manner."<sup>6</sup> (a)

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 20, 1811, *Life, &c., of W. I.*, by P. M. Irving, v. 1, 273.

<sup>2</sup> V. 4, 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Wm. & Mary College Quarterly*, v. 17, 142 (note).

<sup>4</sup> *Life of Jas. Buchanan*, by Geo. T. Curtis, v. 1, 29.

<sup>5</sup> *Social Life in the Early Republic*, by Anne H. Wharton, 152.

<sup>6</sup> Poulson's *Amer. Daily Advertiser*, May 29, 1833.

Some of these statements are blended with a certain amount of disparagement of Randolph in one respect or another. But, whatever may be the justice of this disparagement, they certainly substantiate what we have said about the extent to which he held the ear of his auditors, whether Northern, or Southern, in bondage.

The physical characteristics of no American orator of Randolph's day are better known to us than his. At least five different original portraits of him are in existence. One by Gilbert Stuart, now in the possession of the Corcoran Art Gallery at Washington, was taken in March, 1804, when Randolph was in his 31st year.<sup>1</sup> It is the portrait of a boy, rather than of a man, but in this respect it is true to the original at that age, and the poetic, sculptured face which stands out from it is as handsome and as unmistakably indicative of genius as the face of Byron or Burns. After scanning it, we can readily believe the statement of Littleton Waller Tazewell that, when Randolph was his schoolmate at Williamsburg, he was the most beautiful boy he had ever beheld.<sup>2</sup> Another portrait of Randolph was taken by J. W. Jarvis in 1811, and, in a letter to Henry Brevoort, written from Philadelphia, Washington Irving says that Randolph had consented that he should have a copy of it.<sup>3</sup> About two weeks later, Irving wrote from Washington to Brevoort a letter in which he made these lively comments on Jarvis:

"I have seen nobody on my route but the elegant Jarvis, whom I found sleeping on a sofa-bed in his painting room like a sleeping Venus, and his beautiful dog couched at his feet. I aroused the varlet, and bid him on pain of death to have the likeness of Randolph done on my return; he breakfasted with us and entertained us with several jokes which had passed the ordeal of Baltimore dinner tables."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *J. R.'s Diary*.

<sup>2</sup> *Discourse on Tazewell*, by Grigsby, 131.

<sup>3</sup> March 16, 1811, *Life, &c., of W. I.*, by P. M. Irving, v. 1, 275.

<sup>4</sup> Apr. 2, 1811, *Id.*, v. 1, 276.

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Jarvis' portrait, or a copy of Jarvis' portrait, of Randolph has descended to Mrs. Admiral Edward Simpson, of Washington, from Randolph's friend, Charles Sterett Ridgely, her ancestor, and a portrait is owned by Harold Randolph, of Baltimore, a son of the poet Innes Randolph, which closely resembles that portrait, or copy. Another portrait of Randolph was taken by J. Wood in 1816, and was given by Randolph to Francis Scott Key. In a letter to Key, written from Semmes' hotel at Georgetown, whither he had gone partly for the purpose of seeing Key, and partly for the purpose of giving Wood his last sitting, Randolph said:

"I wished to give Wood an opportunity to finish the picture. I called last evening, but he was gone to Mt. Vernon. I shall drive by his apartment and give him the last sitting this morning. It is a soothing reflection to me that your children, long after I am dead and gone, may look upon their sometime father's friend, of whose features they will have perhaps retained some faint recollection. Let me remind you that, although I am childless, I cannot forego my claim to the return picture on which I set a very high value."<sup>1</sup>

Randolph did receive the return picture; for, some two years later, he wrote to Key, "Wood has again failed but not so entirely as at first. It is you in some of your humors, but neither your serious nor more cheerful face. It shall hang, however, near my bed and I hope will prove a benefit as well as a pleasure to me."<sup>2</sup> That is, he hoped, that the image of such a heavenly-minded man as Key by his bedside would help him in the struggle which once caused him, in familiar converse with a friend, to strike his own breast and to exclaim: "This rebel is in constant revolt."<sup>3</sup> The Wood portrait of Randolph, it is said, is

<sup>1</sup> May 7, 1816, Garland, v. 2, 86.

<sup>2</sup> April 29, 1818, Garland, v. 2, 96

<sup>3</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

now, or was recently, in the possession of some resident of Philadelphia, but we have been unable to trace it to its owner. Another portrait of Randolph is the one donated by Harmanus Bleecker to the State of Virginia. By whom this portrait was executed does not seem to be known. It was apparently from it that the charming likeness of Randolph which appears in Powhatan Bouldin's *Home Reminiscences* was engraved. There is still another portrait of Randolph by Chester Harding—which now hangs in the Corcoran Art Gallery at Washington. “He sat to me for three different pictures,” Harding says in his *My Egotistigraphy*.<sup>1</sup> In one of his letters to the Rev. John Hall, the Rev. James Waddell Alexander states that “the lithograph of Childs from a painting by Harding is said to give the best idea of Randolph.”<sup>2</sup> A portrait of Randolph owned by the late Judge William Leigh, of Danville, Va., closely resembles the Harding portrait in the Corcoran Art Gallery. Numerous other pictorial representations of Randolph are extant, including several highly artistic silhouettes; and quite an assortment of crude caricatures. A curious engraving of what would appear to have been another portrait of Randolph taken when he was quite young is in the possession of Mr. John Stewart Bryan, of Richmond. A letter from Randolph to Theodore Dudley discloses the fact that he had at the date of the letter some sort of a picture of himself taken for his friend, Joseph Clay, of Philadelphia.<sup>3</sup> There is, also, a fine, full length silhouette inscribed: “Original by Brown from Life, John Randolph of Roanoke on his embarkation for Russia on board ship Concord.” This silhouette also belongs to Mr. Bryan. Still another fine, full length silhouette projects Randolph's tall, lank figure appropriately enough on a background consisting of a worm-fence pas-

<sup>1</sup> P. 145.

<sup>2</sup> *40 Yrs. Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 270.

<sup>3</sup> Oct. 13, 1811, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 109.

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ture and high-bred horses. This has been published in the brochure entitled, *Wax Models and Silhouettes*, published by the Society of the Colonial Dames of Massachusetts. *Harpers Magazine* states that the sketch of Randolph with cap and cape, which was reproduced in the second volume of Garland's *Life of Randolph*, was copied from a portrait taken during Randolph's last visit to England and was said to present a by no means overdrawn representation of his appearance when on the street.<sup>1</sup> This we can readily believe after reading what F. W. Thomas has to say about Randolph in his *John Randolph of Roanoke and Other Sketches of Character*.<sup>2</sup>

"One day as I was standing in Market (now Baltimore) Street, I remarked a tall, thin, unique-looking being hurrying towards me with a quick, impatient step, evidently much annoyed by a crowd of boys who were following close at his heels. Not in the obstreperous mirth with which they would have followed a crazy or drunken man or an organ-grinder and his monkey, but in the silent, curious wonder with which they would have haunted a Chinese bedecked in full costume. I instantly knew the individual to be Randolph from the descriptions. I, therefore, advanced towards him that I might take a full observation of his person without violating the rules of courtesy in stopping to gaze at him. As he approached, he occasionally turned towards the boys with an angry glance but without saying anything, and then hurried on as if to outstrip them; but it would not do. They followed close behind the orator, each one observing him so intently that he said nothing to his companions."

The different caricatures of Randolph, which have been brought to our attention, are too rudimentary in point of conception and execution to merit attention in detail. The American cartoonists of Randolph's day knew little more about drawing than the ruder cavemen. In a letter

<sup>1</sup> V. 2, 80 (note).

<sup>2</sup> P. 13.

to Timothy Pickering, Randolph refers to a miniature of himself taken by Wood in 1809.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps, this was the miniature which Theodore Dudley, when a medical student in Philadelphia in 1812, lent, at the request of Dr. Chapman of that City, to the *Portfolio*, in order that it might be engraved for the pages of that publication. The engraving was to be followed in a succeeding number by a biographical sketch of Randolph, but this expectation was defeated by Randolph's disinclination to supply the requisite materials. And even as to the miniature he wrote to Dudley: "I really regret that you lent the miniature for the purpose of having it so wretchedly engraved."<sup>2</sup> A miniature of Randolph is owned by Harold Randolph, of Baltimore; whether it is the Wood miniature or not we cannot say; nor do we know what has become of the model of Randolph's face which was taken the day after his decease by Gerelot.<sup>3</sup>

The celebrity of Randolph may be roughly measured by the extraordinary degree to which he has been pictured in one form or another. In the A. L. A. Portrait Index of the Library of Congress will be found a long list of references to portraits and engravings of him.<sup>4</sup> And what the brush of the limner has omitted the pen of the contemporary writer has abundantly supplied; for Randolph's countenance and figure have been described in the minutest detail—and in some instances most graphically—by many persons who had eagerly scrutinized them. One of these descriptions was composed only a year or so after Jefferson had written to his daughter, Mrs. Eppes, that John Randolph had in the debate, in which he stigmatized our regular soldiery as "rag-a-muffins," "entered into debate

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Norman James MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 121, 126, 130.

<sup>3</sup> *Dr. Francis West, Jr.'s, Reminiscences*, dated May 24, 1833, copied by D. Grinnan, Sept. 27, 1887, from original in possession of Dr. Philip Slaughter, of Culpeper Co., Va.

<sup>4</sup> P. 1203



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with great splendor and approbation.”<sup>1</sup> While this description was penned in 1803, it was not published until after Randolph’s death in 1833. It first appeared in the *New York Courier*, by which it is stated to have been written by a gentleman who had been in habits of intimacy with Randolph ever since it had been written, and it was afterwards copied into the *National Intelligencer*.<sup>2</sup>

“Mr. Randolph,” says this writer, “is beyond comparison the most singular and striking person that I ever met with. As an orator, he is unquestionably the first in the country, and yet there are few men who labor under so many physical disadvantages. He seems made up of contradictions. Though his person is exceedingly tall, thin and disproportionate, he is the most graceful man in the world; and, with an almost feminine voice, he is more distinctly heard in the house than either Mr. D. or Roger—; though the former is more noisy than a field preacher, and the latter more vociferous than a crier of oysters. When seated on the opposite side of the Halls of Congress, Mr. Randolph looks like a youth of 16, but, when he rises to speak, there is an almost sublimity in the effect, proceeding from the contrast in his height when seated or standing. In the former, his shoulders are raised, his head depressed, his body bent; in the latter, he is seen with his figure dilated in the attitude of inspiration, his head raised, his long, thin finger pointing, and his dark, clear chestnut eye flashing lightning at the object of his overwhelming sarcasm.” “Mr. Randolph,” the paper continues, “looks, acts and speaks like no other man I have ever seen. He is original, unique in everything. His style of oratory is emphatically his own. Often diffusive and discursive in his subjects, his language is simple, brief and direct, and, however he may seem to wander from the point occasionally, he never fails to return to it with a bound, illuminating it with flashes of wit, or the happiest illustrations, drawn from a retentive memory and a rich imagination. Though eccentric in his conduct in the ordinary affairs of life and his intercourse with the world, there will be

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 17, 1800, *Life*, by Randall, v. 2, 534.

<sup>2</sup> June 4, 1833.



found more of what is called common sense in his speeches than in those of any other man in Congress. His illustrations are almost always drawn from familiar scenes, and no man is so happy in allusions to fables, proverbs and the ordinary incidents of human life, of which he has been a keen observer. His is not that fungus species of eloquence which expands itself into empty declamation, sacrificing strength, clearness and perspicuity to the more popular charm of redundant metaphors and periods rounded with all the precision of the compass. Mr. Randolph is a man of wit, and wit deals in comparisons; yet his language is perfectly simple and less figurative than that of any of our distinguished speakers. . . . Though continually worried by the little terriers of the House who seem to be sent there for no other purpose than to bark at him, Mr. Randolph never becomes loud or boisterous, but utters the most biting sarcasm with a manner the most irritatingly courteous and a voice that resembles the music of the spheres. Such indeed is the wonderful clearness of his voice and the perfection of his enunciation that his lowest tones circulate like echoes through the hall of Congress, and are more distinctly understood than the roarings of M. L. [Matthew Lyon], the bellowings of R. N., or the bleatings of the rosy and stentorian Robert Ross. In all the requisites of a great orator, he has no superior, and, in the greatest of all, that of attracting, charming, riveting the attention of his hearers, no equal in this country, or perhaps in the world. . . . It is with regret, I add, that this brilliant man, who has already attracted the attention not only of his countrymen but of the world, will in all probability survive but a few years. His health appears irretrievably lost, and his constitution irreparably injured. A premature decay seems gradually creeping upon all his vital powers, and an inevitable, unseen influence appears to be dragging him to the grave. At the age of 30, with all the world in his grasp, wealth in his possession, and glory and power in perspective, he is in constitution an infirm old man, with light, glossy hair parted over his forehead, and tied loosely behind with a black ribbon; teeth white as ivory; an eye sparkling with intellect and a countenance seamed with a thousand small wrinkles. At a distance of a

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hundred yards, he will be mistaken for an overgrown boy of premature growth; approach him and, at every step, his appearance changes, and he becomes gradually metamorphosed into an old man. You will then see a face such as you never saw before, never will see again; if he likes you, a smile, such as you never beheld on the face of any other man, and, when that smile passes away, a countenance bearing an expression of long continued anxiety and suffering that will make your heart ache."<sup>1</sup>

This well-written paper ends with these glowing words:

"When he [Randolph] departs this scene, in which he has suffered the martyrdom of sickness and detraction combined, if living, I will bear this testimony that he will not leave behind any man that can claim superiority over him as a glorious orator, a sagacious, high-minded, independent patriot and inflexibly honest man."<sup>2</sup>

Lemuel Sawyer became a member of the House in 1807, and his long association with Randolph in that body gives what he has to say about Randolph's appearance and oratorical characteristics a peculiar value.

"His color," Sawyer says, "was somewhat tawny; he was straight, and he walked like the Indian with one foot placed on a straight line before the other. When he was seated at his desk, he appeared rather below the middle size, but, when he arose, he seemed to unjoint or unfold himself, and stood erect, near six feet high; his lower limbs being disproportionately long for his body. His head was small, his hair light, and worn long, and tied behind; his eyes were black and piercing, his mouth handsome but with the arrangement of his teeth gave him a puerile look; his chin rather pointed and smooth or beardless; his hands small, and his fingers long and tapering. His dress was that of the old Virginia gentleman. He wore white top boots with drab or buckskin shortclothes, and sometimes gaiters, and, though neat, he was generally plain

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 170.

<sup>2</sup>*Id.*, 174.

in his appearance, and had no ambition to conform to any prevalent fashion."<sup>1</sup>

It would seem that the color of Randolph's eyes was hazel as the writer in the *New York Courier* states, and not black as Sawyer states, but, as we go on, it will be seen that the testimony on this point is conflicting. As to Sawyer's statement that Randolph, when erect, stood near six feet high, it is enough to say that his exact height was six feet and two inches and his width across the shoulders thirteen inches.<sup>2</sup> The observations of Sawyer on Randolph's eloquence are equally interesting:

"In his latter years, he could not confine himself to the point, but touched upon things in general as if in a tone of conversational improvisation. He spoke so slow and deliberately that I have thought in listening to him that he had not considered the subject before he arose; but, as he proceeded, his mind was put into motion, or rather commotion, and he threw off the new coinage of his active brain as fast as it was struck. He was greatly assisted and encouraged, and generally arrayed his countenance in a bland smile, if he could discover among his audience anyone paying particular attention to his address. He would rivet his eye upon him, and seem to address him alone; and I have seen members in that case nod assent to his assertions as he proceeded, which he appeared to take as a marked favor. During his speech on the Judiciary bill, I believe in April, 1826, I happened to be a listener and standing near the President of the Senate when Mr. Randolph was denouncing the Executive for buying up the leading prints in the different States. Among others, he enumerated the *Petersburg Intelligencer*, and added one or two others, and, looking steadily at me, asked was there not the whole three that had given in their adhesion? I was ignorant of the circumstance, and did not return the nod of assent, which seemed to confuse Mr. Randolph, and, remarking that he knew who he was talking to, dropped that part of his

<sup>1</sup> P. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *Dr. Francis West, Jr.'s, Reminiscences*, supra.

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subject. In his earlier years, he was as remarkable for adhering to the question before the House as other members, and, when roused by opposition, seldom left it till it was completely exhausted. He was then animated, clear and distinct; his delivery was forcible and his language pure, his words select and strictly grammatical, and his order and arrangement lucid and harmonious. His voice was clear, loud and sonorous, and almost as fine as a female's, and, in his extemporaneous efforts, in which he excelled, his action was perfectly suited to his expression. If he was treated with courtesy and deference by his antagonists, he always returned it with interest; but, if they provoked him by the use of any personality or unfairness in stating his arguments, he retaliated with terrible retribution."<sup>1</sup>

In a later chapter of his book, Sawyer returns to the same subject in these terms:

"He was possessed of a fine taste for literature, a general reader, a 'ripe scholar,' particularly in the Department of Belles Lettres; by which acquirements he was well supplied with apt illustrations to embellish and enrich his oratory. He levied his contributions from the wide dominions of ancient and modern literature with the undisputed authority of a conqueror, which he stored away in his capacious memory as an inexhaustible magazine to distribute with judicious discrimination upon every subject that arose in debate. Although in the course of his long political career of more than 30 years, he spoke volumes, and some of his speeches, towards the close of it, were rather verbose and irrelevant, yet he never failed, during some part of them, to arouse and astonish his audience by some classical allusions, happy similes, 'some thoughts that breathed and words that burned,' some beautiful and striking metaphors and most mellifluous and harmonious periods. Even now in reading those speeches (although so much is lost in their delivery), while we may have to penetrate through a heap of chaff (if anything of his may be so abused in terms) in reaching the kernel or grain, we are abundantly rewarded in

<sup>1</sup> P. 43.

the richness, if not in the abundance, of the product. . . . Although the mind might not be chained and carried captive in the triumphant march of a gigantic intellect by the depth of research and the force of reasoning, yet was it fascinated, won and unresistingly carried along, as by a spell, by the ease, the grace, the fluency and the pleasing, emphatic delivery of the speaker. His sallies of wit, his biting sarcasm, his happy retorts and home thrusts; his satiric turn, or his playful humor rendered him a more agreeable and popular speaker than others who were more severe and elaborate. If Ridicule be the test of Truth, he had a most effective way of drawing her into the light of all the orators of his day; he possessed the rare art of trying the measures and the opinions of the prominent men, to whom it was his destiny to be regularly opposed, by that touchstone; and by it to hold them up to the derision or censure of the People. With this powerful lever, he could shake, if not move from its foundations, any administration. That it contributed in no small degree to subvert that of the second Adams, no man can doubt who witnessed his repeated and dexterous attacks, and observed the effects of his peculiar mode of warfare."<sup>1</sup>

Sawyer also tells us that Randolph never entered into a contest to catch the eye of the Speaker: "If he saw an eagerness in members to give their views," he says, "he generally waited till the last one had concluded and the question was ordered to be put."<sup>2</sup> In another place, the same writer expresses the opinion that, as an orator, Randolph was more splendid than solid<sup>3</sup>; yet there could be no better proof of the admiration excited by Randolph's eloquence in the House than the language which Sawyer, who was a thick and thin administration Democrat, and far from partial to Randolph personally, sometimes employs in regard to him. Randolph, he thought, was still a powerful extemporaneous speaker as late as the debates over the admission of Missouri into the Union in 1821.<sup>4</sup> There

<sup>1</sup> P. 123.<sup>2</sup> P. 58.<sup>3</sup> P. 123.<sup>4</sup> P. 82.

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had been no biographers of Randolph before himself, he says, to mark "the bright track of his resplendent car."<sup>1</sup> In using such a figure of speech, Sawyer was but doing what almost all commentators on Randolph as an orator do, when endeavoring to describe the general effect of his speeches on their minds. Corruscation, brilliancy, high candle-power is the dominant idea that the hearer seems to have brought away from them. For instance, when Thomas H. Benton comes to speak of Randolph, he finds his illustration in the same field of imagery as Sawyer.

"For more than thirty years," he says, "he [Randolph] was the political meteor of Congress, blazing with undiminished splendor, during the whole time, and often appearing as the 'planetary plague' which shed not war and pestilence on nations but agony and fear on members."<sup>2</sup>

In 1808, the year succeeding that in which Sawyer took his seat in the House, Francis Walker Gilmer heard Randolph in the House for the first time, and, later, recorded the impression left on him in his *Sketches*, which it is impossible for any Virginian to read without remembering that they were written by a brilliant young man who was prematurely cut off like a blossoming spray from a fruit tree when he had hardly passed that "delightful season of life" which Randolph, in the Virginia Convention of 1829-30, feelingly reminded its presiding officer, the aged James Monroe, that neither of them could ever recall<sup>3</sup>; but not until Jefferson had pronounced him "the best educated subject we have raised since the Revolution,"<sup>4</sup> and Randolph had conferred upon him the full measure of his admiring and affectionate friendship.

"The first time that I ever felt the spell of eloquence," declares Gilmer, "was when a boy standing in the gallery of

<sup>1</sup> P. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *30 Yrs.' View*, v. i., 473.

<sup>3</sup> *Debates*, 313.

<sup>4</sup> *Life*, by Randall, v. 3, 497.

the Capitol in the year 1808. It was on the floor of that House I saw rise a gentleman who in every quality of his person, his voice, his mind, his character, is a phenomenon amongst men. His figure is tall, spare and somewhat emaciated; his limbs long, delicate, slow and graceful in all their motions; his countenance with the lineaments of boyhood, but the wrinkles, the faded complexion, the occasional sadness of old age, and even of decrepitude; possessing however vast compass and force of expression. His voice is small but of the clearest tone and most flexible modulation I ever heard. In his speech, not a breath of air is lost; it is all compressed into round, smooth liquid sound; and its inflections are so sweet, its emphasis so appropriate and varied, that there is a positive pleasure in hearing him speak any words whatever. His manner of thinking is as peculiar as his person and voice. He has so long spoken parables that he now thinks in them. Antitheses, jests, beautiful conceits, with a striking turn and point of expression, flow from his lips with the same natural ease, and often with singular felicity of application, as regular series of arguments follow each other in the deductions of logical thinkers. His invective, which is always piquant, is frequently adorned with the beautiful metaphors of Burke and animated by bursts of passion worthy of Chatham. Popular opinion has ordained Mr. Randolph the most eloquent speaker now in America."<sup>1</sup>

But Gilmer's appreciation is not without its limitations, though they are somewhat inconsistent with the rest of his text. The epithets applicable to Randolph's style of speaking were "striking" and "brilliant," he further says. Randolph adapted his phrases to the sense, with poetic felicity, and his voice to the sound, with musical exactness; but the nature of his eloquence was not favorable to the excitement of any deep or permanent passion. His deliberate, graceful, and commanding delivery could not be too much praised; but his total want of method could not be too much condemned. There was no breach in the train of John Marshall's thoughts; there was little connection be-

<sup>1</sup> P. 18.



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tween Mr. Randolph's. Each had his separate excellence, but each was far from being a finished orator. (a) Samuel C. Jewett, of Maine, an ardent administration Republican, writing to General H. A. S. Dearborn, of Massachusetts, on Feb. 5, 1817, has this glowing praise to bestow on Randolph as an orator, though of the opinion that he was a very useless member of Congress:

"I was highly amused on Monday in hearing John Randolph abuse the District of Columbia in consequence of a petition of one of the incorporated banks to be incorporated. He talked about every subject, and made an elegant speech about matters and things in general. He is truly a man of astonishing powers of mind. His manner of speaking is the most forcible I ever witnessed, and his language elegant beyond description."<sup>1</sup>

W. H. Sparks, in his *Memories of Fifty Years*, thus depicts for us Randolph's appearance about 1821:

"His figure was *outré*; his voice fine as the treble of a violin; his face wan, wrinkled and without beard; his limbs long and unsightly, especially his arms and fingers. The skin seemed to grow to the attenuated bone, and the large, ill-formed joints were extremely ugly."<sup>2</sup>

To this auditor, too, the strongest impression conveyed by the eloquence of Randolph was that of lustre; of a radiant figure appareled in exceeding brightness; and, in his effort to communicate his impression to the reader, he uses a tawdry simile unworthy of his general literary merits. Referring to the debates over the admission of Missouri into the Union, he says:

"Mr. Randolph was the leader in the debates of the House, and occupied the floor frequently in the delivery of lengthy and almost always very interesting speeches. These touched

<sup>1</sup> *Wm. & Mary College Quarterly*, v. 17, 140.

<sup>2</sup> P. 236.



every subject connected with the Government, its history and its powers. They were brilliant and beautiful; full of classical learning and allusion, and sparkling as a casket of diamonds thrown upon and rolling along a Wilton carpet."<sup>1</sup>

This is almost as bad as the naïve allegation in *The South in the Building of the Nation* that Randolph "was a tall, lean, lank man with long fingers which he used to great advantage in debate."<sup>2</sup>—an artless announcement which, by the way, reminds us of the foreword in the ferocious attack which Richard Rush made upon Randolph in 1828, under the name of Julius: "The fiend is long and lean and lank."

Julius Melbourn informs us that Randolph "stood and walked exactly perpendicular." "No marble pillar could be formed more so," he says. Melbourn also says: "He had a fine eye but there was no more expression or variation in the color of his face than in a block of granite."<sup>3</sup>

"His peculiar voice, sweet as a flute and an octave higher than other men's voices, his long, wand-like fingers, spare form, pallid face—the skin upon it not wrinkled but corrugated into compartments like a bed-quilt—his dark, large clear eye, his stately but quiet carriage, made him beyond expression the most striking person I have ever met."<sup>4</sup>

These words are extracted from the *Reminiscences* of David Holmes Conrad, who first heard Randolph speak in the House in 1812. In his very important recollections of John Randolph, Jacob Harvey, who first became acquainted with him about 1823, says:

"More than 20 years have elapsed since I first became acquainted with the late eccentric John Randolph. But time has not obliterated the deep impressions which his great and

<sup>1</sup> P. 226.

<sup>2</sup> V. 12 (*So. Biog.*), 328.

<sup>3</sup> *Life, &c., of J. M.*, by Hammond, 91.

<sup>4</sup> Scrap Book of Ellen Bruce Baylor.

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varied talents made upon my memory; nor shall I ever forget, while life remains, the delight with which I listened to his most captivating eloquence."<sup>1</sup>

In a letter to Caroline Webster, his future wife, undated, but written from Washington in 1816, Lewis H. Machen, an accomplished scholar, who held a position in the office of the Secretary of the United States Senate for nearly fifty years, institutes this comparison between Randolph and Pinkney as orators:

"Mr. Randolph and Mr. Pinkney possess great oratorical powers but differ in their peculiar excellence. Randolph, cool and collected, is seldom agitated, or even warmed by his subject. Desultory, and perhaps superficial, incapable of the higher species of eloquence, seldom attempting alone logical deduction, and never with success, he yet seizes the attention by the fascination of his manner, communicates his ideas with great clearness, and gives to the subject every grace which an intimate acquaintance with classic literature seldom fails to impart. Those who desire profound investigation would return from Mr. Randolph disappointed; but for cool, yet cutting sarcasm, severity of retort, quickness of reply, the play of fancy, and coruscations of wit, he has scarcely a superior."<sup>2</sup>

The vigor and brilliancy of Randolph's mind remained unimpaired down to the time when he became a member of the United States Senate, and, even during his Senatorial term, and afterwards, he spoke occasionally with his former inspiration; but from the date of his election to the Senate began the extreme irrelevancy and extravagance of speech which would compel us to believe that at times, during his Senatorial term, his intellect was gravely disordered, even if positive testimony to that effect had not been rendered in the litigation which arose over his wills after his death. The melodious bells of his eloquence

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, Aug. 19, 1843, v. 1, 312.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters of A. W. Machen*, compiled by A. W. Machen, Jr., 44.

were still sweet, but often they were like sweet bells jangled—out of tune. Niles, the proprietor of *Niles' Register*, was very hostile to him. Newspapers generally were; for his candid, fearless tongue impugned their accuracy and fairness too often for their editors to cherish any friendly feeling for him; and besides he was as morbidly sensitive to the tyranny of the press as to other forms of tyranny; but the following observations on Randolph, which appeared in *Niles' Register* in 1826, when Randolph was a Senator, doubtless have at least the semblance of truth which belongs even to the grossest caricature:

“Those who never have heard this far-famed, highly gifted and *extraordinary* man deliver one of his *free* speeches, or rather ‘long talks,’ cannot entertain anything like a tolerably correct idea either of his *manner* or his *matter*. The first cannot be placed upon paper, and no other than a master in the histrionic art, some one like *Matthews*, can fairly represent it; and the second, if put down exactly as delivered, word for word, with all the pauses, nods and motions, would seem no other than a broad caricature of what he did say to at least ninety-nine such persons out of a hundred. Many of his speeches are written out and placed into his hands for revision (Note:—The editors of the *National Intelligencer* are pretty freely charged with suppressing his late speeches. It is well known in Washington that *they* are not censurable for the suppression or delay of them); and, when not so, no regular reporter would risk his own reputation for fidelity by giving the thousand expletives and *sharply-pointed* and *rough* words, with which these speeches, or talks, abound. The *subjects* touched by him are, no doubt, correctly set forth; but the *whole* that he says never is published, and for the reason above stated—not that Mr. R. would shrink from any responsibility on account of *words* used, but because of the repetition and redundancy of his words, with his innumerable ‘Yes, Sirs,’ and ‘No, Sirs.’ Now and then, however, he delivers a sentence, as perhaps no other man can, *direct* to his purpose, beautiful in its construction;

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and with something that is pleasing even in its asperity; which interests even in its rudeness, or wanton attack upon private or defenceless individuals; and, in general, it is in severe invective or desultory conversation that he excels; and in these, indeed, he wonderfully excels. He rarely attempts what would be called a regular argument, and to dwell for one hour upon any subject is not expected of him. Nine-tenths of his long speeches just as well apply to a discussion about the constitutional powers of congress to make a road as to the case of John Smith or the long disputed claim about Amy Darden's stud-horse; and hence it is that, on one occasion, last week, the Senate was left without a quorum to adjourn, and on another that there were hardly a dozen senators in their seats, at least one of whom *appeared* to be pretty soundly asleep, and for nearly an hour, towards the close of the sitting.

“Though frequent opportunities have occurred, it is several years since I listened to Mr. Randolph even for half an hour at a time: but, on the 2nd inst., I spent thirty-five minutes in the Senate while he was speaking. What he said during that period, if *fully* reported, would fill from two to three pages of this work—I mean, if all the *words* that he used were printed. I had been told that the Bankrupt Bill was before the Senate, but, during the time stated, he never, to the best of my recollection, mentioned, or even remotely alluded to, it, or any of its parts, in any manner whatsoever. The following is a faithful account of the chief *subjects* that he talked about. I do not pretend to give his *words*, unless here and there; but as to the *substance* of what he did say I am not mistaken, if substance there was in his remarks.

“When I entered the chamber, he was giving out a plan to make a bank by persons resolved to become ‘rag-earls.’ Well—Sir, we agree to make a bank. You subscribe 10,000 dollars, you 10,000, and you 10 or 20,000, and so on; looking toward different members. Then we borrow some rags, or make up the capital out of our own promissory notes. Next we buy an iron chest, for safety against fire and against thieves, but the latter is wholly unnecessary; who would steal our paper, Sir? All being ready, we issue bills; I wish I had one of them (hunting his pockets as though he expected to find one),

like the Owl Creek Bank or Washington and Warren, black or red; I think, Sir, they begin with 'I promise to Pay'; yes, *promise* to pay, Sir—promise to pay. He dwelt upon this making of a bank for about five minutes, and then said something concerning Unitarians in religion and politics; making a dash at the President and the administration; mentioning also Sir Robert Walpole in a way that I do not recollect. Then he spoke of the Bible, and expressed his disgust at what are called 'family Bibles'; though he thought no family safe or would flourish without a Bible; but not of an American edition! These published by the Stationers Company of London ought only, or chiefly, to have authority, except those from the presses of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. He described these corporations briefly. They would be fined 10,000 £ sterling, if they should leave the word *not* out of the Seventh Commandment, however convenient it might be to some, or agreeable to others, (looking directly at certain members, and half-turning himself round to the ladies). He never bought an American edition of any book. He had no faith in their accuracy. He wished all his books to have Cadell's imprint—Cadell, of the Strand, London. But people were liable to be cheated. He had bought a copy of Aristotle's Ethics to present to a lady, to a lady, Sir, who could understand them, yes, Sir—and he found it full of errors, though it had Cadell's imprint; which he gave us to understand was a forgery. From the Bible he passed to Shakespeare, or rather mingled the holy writings with the productions of the poet, preferring each nearly equally, and drubbing some one that he named most soundly for having had the impudence to publish a 'family Shakespeare,' and he made a quotation from his favorite author. He next jumped on the American 'Protestant Episcopal church,' and vehemently disavowed all connection with it; declaring that he belonged to the Church of Old England. He told us that he was baptized by a man regularly authorized by the Bishop of London who had laid his hands upon him, (laying his own hands on the head of the gentleman next to him), and he spoke warmly of the character of the Bishop and of the priest who had baptised him; wishing that the latter might have lived to perform the

last office for him. Then as in reference to the Episcopal church he gave something as a quotation from a part of the service, beginning with 'them that'—as reprobating its grammar, and implying that no good man could belong to a church which used such language! Suddenly, he spoke about wine. It was often mentioned in the Bible, and he approved of the drinking of it, if in a gentlemanly way, at the table; not in the closet; not in the closet; but, as to whiskey, he demanded that any one should shew him the word in the Bible; it was not there. No, Sir, you can't find it in the whole book. Next, or shortly after this, he spoke of his land, saying that he held it by a *royal* grant, with which he seemed greatly pleased; but, in a minute or two, was speaking of the 'men of Kent,' in England, saying that Kent had never been conquered by William the Conqueror, but had made terms with him, and, in consequence, when the militia of England are called to the field, the men of Kent are entitled to the front rank. He spoke of a song which had been made on the 'men of Kent,' which, I think, he said he would give a thousand pounds to have been the author of. He was apparently about to rehearse or sing it, when, being close to Mr. Randolph, and within three or four steps of the door, I hastily retreated, and left the chamber, wondering what the 'men of Kent' and William the Conqueror had to do with the *royal* grant by which Mr. Randolph held his land, or what relation that tenure had to the bill before the senate to establish an uniform system of bankruptcy; and thinking that to eat my *dinner* was an affair as interesting, at half past 3 o'clock, as to hear a *song* about the 'men of Kent.'

"I could have made the preceding sketch more ample than it is, but would avoid the suspicion of misrepresenting the 'Senator from Virginia.' He talks with so much ease that, unless for want of 'meat, drink or sleep,' one would suppose that he might speak twelve months without stopping; though he freely stops to rest himself, and keeps the senate waiting, when he pleases. A greater part of the time that I heard him, he was leaning, or lolling, against the railing which is fixed behind the outer row of chairs, to protect the senators from the pressure of persons passing around the chamber; and the careless ease, with which he delivered himself, brought to mind

- the '*Arabian Nights Entertainments*,' because of their fluency. They, however, have a regular design, which his speeches have not. Mr. Randolph says *any* thing which happens to cross his mind, and cares not a tittle whether it belongs to any subject that ever was discussed, or ever shall be discussed, or not; and it is this perfect indifference to everything like method, with the versatility of his talents, his sometimes beautiful sentences, keen wit and unsparing invective that causes 'the million' to press in crowds to hear him, and makes the chamber of the Senate of the United States a place of deposit for empty *Senatorial* seats. It has rarely, if ever, happened, before Mr. Randolph's long speeches were heard in the Senate, that that body adjourned without a quorum, or that a quorum was not present to listen to what a member had to say. The courtesy of the gentlemen composing it, one towards another, has forbidden occurrences of this sort; but to expect that persons shall quietly keep their places, and listen five or six hours to *discourses* not at all interesting to them, and when, perhaps, they may not have touched food for nine or ten hours, is out of all reason, and far beyond aught that courtesy should require. The Vice President, however, always retains his seat, 'like patience on a monument,' and, indeed, very seldom even changes his position. Such is a faint, but faithful, outline of proceedings had in the Senate of the United States. Who is chiefly to blame for such transactions, the Senate, as a body, the Vice-President, or Mr. Randolph alone, is not for me to say; but it is generally felt, and pretty freely acknowledged, by many of the Senators themselves, that their body has lost a large portion of their own respect for it, and of the respect of the people, through Mr. Randolph's incessant talking. If every other gentleman spoke as long as he does, and every one might speak as long and as much to the purpose as he commonly does, a three years' perpetual session would not do the *business* of a week; for it must further be observed that, except in the simple act of giving his vote, Mr. R. attends not to public business, unless *speaking* is to be regarded as *doing* the business of the nation. This may be agreeable to the established notion of the *Attick* 'School of Virginia,' as set forth by Mr. Ritchie in the *Enquirer*, but will not suit the 'Boeotians' of Pennsylvania, &c.,



as the people of that great and prosperous commonwealth have been called. Persons of the 'Schools' of Mr. Giles, or of Mr. Randolph, would spend more time in *discussing* the powers and duties of a legislature to make a road or build a bridge than Pennsylvania would require to pass the law *and effect all the purposes of it*. Which is best, may be seen in the progress of population and wealth in the two States. Why is it that the *statesmen* of Virginia do not attend to these things? Every feeling of my heart is that Virginia should be a strong state. It is for the 'general welfare' that she should so be. But her *politicians*, by talking and speaking, have made her a comparatively weak one. They would, however, be amply punished by being *compelled* to sit six hours every day, and preserve the appearance of listening to Mr. Randolph. They would heartily wish that gentleman at home, 'planting corn' in his own fields, with his own hands; or in England, or anywhere else, so that they could not hear him: and yet his speeches are read with great avidity, as matters of *amusement*, when seated at our leisure, and at *liberty* to read or let it alone."<sup>1</sup>

Commenting on this article, the editor of the *Franklin Gazette* justly said:

"It is an easy matter to turn into ridicule a man of eccentric manners. We publish a specimen of this kind of wit today from *Niles' Register*, and though the report of facts may be correct, as far as it goes, had the whole speech been candidly reported, and not for the purpose of producing a ludicrous effect; had not the characteristic peculiarities been presented in a glaring light, and the subject matter been studiously kept out of view, we are, indeed, much mistaken if the reader would agree with Mr. Niles when he asserts that the speech had no bearing upon the bill before the House."<sup>2</sup>

To these comments Niles rejoined with considerable heat, and published in the same issue from the columns of the *National Intelligencer* an unrevised report of a speech

<sup>1</sup> *Niles' Register*, May 13, 1826, v. 6, 186 (3rd series).

<sup>2</sup> *Niles' Register*, Aug. 26, 1826, v. 6 (3rd series), 441.



by Randolph on a Senate bill providing for an addition to the number of Circuit Judges, which he contended was a fair standard by which to test the justice of his article. In the Senate, Randolph, doubtless, often spoke much that was very little germane to the subject of the debate, but, as this report did not pretend to be anything but an unfinished sketch, it may well be accepted with grave doubts. After reading every reported speech delivered by Randolph in Congress, we can at least say that no such rambling and incoherent speech as the one outlined in this sketch was ever reported in the record of the House debates. Moreover, we should remember that it was, perhaps, of this speech that Randolph wrote from The Hague to Dr. Brockenbrough in these terms on Aug. 8, 1826:

“I hope, however, that no report of my speeches will be taken as evidence of what I have uttered; for I have never seen anything further from a just representation than the report of one that G. and S. say I in part revised. And so I did, and, if they had printed it by their own proof-sheet, now in London, I should have been better satisfied with that part; the first, that I did not revise, is mangled, and hardly intelligible even to me.”<sup>1</sup>

More important than the satire of Niles is a letter from Daniel Webster, who, however, had a sore spot in his memory too, to Mr. Denison:

“Mr. Randolph,” Webster said, “was elected last fall a Senator from Virginia. It was unexpected, but his great devotion to certain political opinions cherished in that State gave him the election. He is a violent opposer of the present government, and has conducted his part of the discussions in the Senate in a way hitherto altogether unknown. The Vice President has found out that he has no authority to call him to order or restrain his wanderings; so he talks on for two,

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 272.

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four and sometimes six hours at a time, saying whatever occurs to him on all subjects. This course and its indulgence by the Presiding Officer of the Senate (Calhoun) has produced a very strong sensation throughout the country."<sup>1</sup>

But there was an individual and a highly intellectual and discriminating one, too, who took a much more favorable view of Randolph's loquacity and excursiveness when a Senator; and that was Josiah Quincy, Jr. In his *Figures of the Past*, he speaks in one place of the "admiration" with which he had listened to the "wonderful improvisation in the Senate" of Randolph.<sup>2</sup> And, in the same volume, after mentioning that he had twice heard him in the Senate, he says:

"His speeches were charming or provoking, according to the point of view of the listener. To a Senator anxious to expedite the public business or to hurry through the bill he had in charge, Randolph's harangues upon all sorts of irrelevant subjects must have been very annoying; but to one who was not troubled by such responsibility they were a delightful entertainment. There was no effort about the speeches; they were given with absolute ease; the speaker constantly changing his position, turning from side to side, and at times leaning against the rail which enclosed the Senatorial chairs. His dress was a blue riding coat with buckskin breeches; for he always rode to the Senate, followed by his black servant; both master and man being finely mounted. His voice was silvery in its tones; becoming unpleasantly shrill only when conveying direct invective. Four-fifths of what he said had the slenderest possible connection with the subject which had called him up; but, so far as the chance visitor was concerned, this variety only added a charm to the entertainment."<sup>3</sup>

A few pages later, when describing Randolph's second speech in relation to the Panama mission, Quincy observes:

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Daniel Webster*, by George Ticknor Curtis, 2nd Ed., N. Y. v. I, 270.      <sup>2</sup> P. 212.      <sup>3</sup> P. 220.

"But Mr. Randolph's great effort (if I may so call a performance which to him was evidently no effort at all) was reserved for the next day. He announced that he should ask for the consideration of his resolution immediately upon the meeting of the Senate, and that meant that another speech would be forthcoming. I was early upon the spot, and for two hours (he) held my attention fixed by his various and fluent improvisations, his cutting irony, his terribly sincere, although absolutely undeserved, denunciations. His memory and imagination seemed inexhaustible. He would take a subject (almost any which happened to get in his way), turn and twist it about, display it in some fantastic light, and then with scorn push it aside."<sup>1</sup>

James Buchanan was in the House with Randolph at one time, and he also has something to say about Randolph as an orator:

"He had a shrill and penetrating voice, and could be heard distinctly in every portion of the House. He spoke with great deliberation, and often paused for an instant as if to select the most appropriate word. His manner was confident, proud and imposing; and pointing, as he always did, his long finger at the object of attack, he gave peculiar emphasis to the severity of his language."<sup>2</sup>

Because of the enmity excited by his aggressive peculiarities, Randolph's influence in the House, Buchanan thought, "bore no proportion to the brilliancy of his talents."<sup>3</sup>

Randolph, as he was during the debates of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829-30, has also been depicted in a highly life-like manner by more than one hand.

"We have often heard persons attempt to imitate his [Randolph's] voice; but we have never known anyone to succeed; for it was in fact inimitable," says Hugh R. Pleasants.

<sup>1</sup> P. 226.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Jas. Buchanan*, by Curtis, v. 1, 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

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"We know not how the opera people would class it; for we doubt whether any of them ever heard anything like it. It was higher than that of men generally, yet it did not in the least partake of that harsh quality which is generally found associated with a higher voice in persons of the sterner sex. On the contrary, it was as soft, as rich and as delicious as the most mellifluous tones of Jenny Lind, when she pours her whole soul into one of her breathing melodies. Of course, we speak of him only, as we saw him in the Convention; for we never saw him in any other deliberative body, and we are disposed to think that he was more himself, while here, than he had been elsewhere for years. It has been said that in his unhappy moments in Congress, while laboring under fits of violent exasperation, his voice became dry and harsh in the extreme. . . . He usually spoke with the greatest deliberation; his left hand resting on his cane, and his right employed in giving emphasis to his words. Each sentence, nay each word, seemed to be thoroughly weighed before he gave utterance to it; and it was pronounced so distinctly that it was impossible to mistake it. We once saw a beautiful handwriting, so distinct that it could be read as easily as print, which possessed the remarkable peculiarity of having a full stop after every word. We have often thought there was some analogy between it and Mr. Randolph's style of speaking, as it presented itself to our observation in the Convention. . . . Mr. Randolph's eyes exceeded in brightness and penetration any we have ever seen in a human head. They absolutely blazed when kindled by the excitement of debate. It was his custom to employ very little gesticulation, his forefinger being used almost entirely for purposes of that sort."<sup>1</sup>

Another spectator of the proceedings of the Convention was Jeremiah Bell Jeter, one of the most celebrated Baptist divines of his day.

"The most notable man in the body," he said, "or at least the member who made the deepest impression on my mind,

<sup>1</sup> "Sketches of Va. Conv., 1829-30," by Hugh R. Pleasants, *So. Lit. Mess.*, v. 17, 303, 304.

and of whom I retain the most vivid recollection, was John Randolph of Roanoke. He was unquestionably the most perfect orator to whom in the course of half a century it has been my privilege to listen. I have heard many of the most eminent speakers of the present day in this country, and some in Europe, in legislative halls, and in pulpits, and I have not seen one who seemed so thoroughly to understand the art of public speaking as he did. I have probably heard speakers more profound in thought, more convincing in argument and more moving in appeal; but none so faultless in speaking as was the orator of Roanoke. His voice was sharp and quite peculiar, but not unpleasing to the ear. His gestures were few, but all graceful and expressive. In the art of pausing, he was unrivalled. He would throw together the clauses of a sentence, exciting expectation, and, before he would bring out its meaning with his hand gracefully elevated, he would pause as if some thought too large for utterance were struggling to find expression. There was no doubt but that the sentence would be gracefully and forcibly finished. The delay intensified the desire to hear the conclusion. Every head was pressed forward, and every eye was strained to mark the effect of the coming bolt; nor was there any disappointment when it came. It went to the mark with unerring precision, and with resistless force. His style was natural, clear and strong, adapted simply to convey and press his thoughts."<sup>1</sup>

Another description of Randolph in the Convention is from the pen of George Wythe Munford, who was for a time its secretary. He tells us

“that Randolph’s head, in proportion to his frame, was small; that his hair grew low upon his brow, and that he parted it in the middle; that his features were rather delicate and feminine; that his eyes were black and full of lustre; that his voice was peculiarly feminine and shrill, yet clear as the tones of a silver bell, and of a compass to convey its lowest whisper to a distance; that his neck was very short, and deeply seated between his shoulders, which were somewhat elevated, and that his

<sup>1</sup> *Recollections of a Long Life*, 169, 170.

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frame, for one so thin, was massive; his arms unusually long and his fingers attenuated.”<sup>1</sup>

As to Randolph's methods of speech when addressing the Convention, Munford, who had heard him in the United States Senate, tells us that they were wholly different from his eccentric and discursive mode of speaking in that body.

“It [Randolph's first speech] was calm, collected, dignified and commanding,” he says, “and his gesticulation was that of a master actor. He would begin to express a thought in language, and then, leaving the sentence incomplete, would by a wave of the hand or a change of the muscles of the face, give the idea as perfect to the mind as if conveyed by the most speaking words. No reporter can catch these peculiarities, and it is difficult to convey a just conception of the effect.”<sup>2</sup>

Dwelling further on the dramatic element of Randolph's oratory, Munford, after quoting some of Randolph's previous utterances in his first speech, adds:

“And then he said ‘the gentleman from Augusta,’ and he seized his cravat with both hands, and twisted and pulled at it, as if feeling a sense of extreme suffocation, and the contortions of face, united with the efforts of the hands to relax the throttle he felt—the whole gesture—expressing the idea so forcibly that you saw it palpable that he intended to say that Virginia was suffering strangulation from the ruffians who were assailing her.”<sup>3</sup>

Equally speaking are the words of Hugh Blair Grigsby, who was himself a member of the Convention; having succeeded to the vacancy created by the resignation of Robert Barraud Taylor:

“Of all the members of the Convention, Mr. Randolph excited the greatest curiosity. Not a word that fell from

<sup>1</sup> *The Two Parsons, etc.*, 568.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 571.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, 571.

his lips escaped the public ear; not a movement the public eye. When he rose to speak, the empty galleries began to fill, and, when he ended and the spell was dissolved, the throng passed away. It was on the 14th of November he made his first speech. Mr. Stanard had just concluded his speech, and the question on the amendment of Judge Green to the resolution of the Legislative Committee, basing the representation in the House of Delegates on white population exclusively, was about to be taken when he arose to address the chair. The word passed through the City in an instant that Randolph was speaking, and soon the House, the Lobby and the Gallery were crowded almost to suffocation. He was evidently ill at ease when he began his speech, but soon recovered himself when he saw the telling effect of every sentence that he uttered. He spoke nearly two hours, and, throughout that time, every eye was fixed upon him, and, among the most attentive of his hearers, were Mr. Madison and Mr. Monroe, who had not heard him before since his rupture with the administration of their predecessor in the Presidency. From that day, he addressed the body with perfect self-possession, and, although he did not at any subsequent time speak at length, he frequently mingled with marked ability in debate; and it was easy to tell from the first sentence that fell from his lips when he was in fine tune and temper, and, on such occasions, the thrilling music of his speech fell upon the ear of that excited assembly like the voice of a bird singing in the pause of the storm. It is difficult to explain the influence which he exerted in that body. He inspired terror to a degree that, even at this distance of time, seems inexplicable. He was feared alike by East and West, by friend and foe. The arrows from his quiver, if not dipped in poison, were pointed and barbed, rarely missed the mark, and as seldom failed to make a rankling wound. He seemed to paralyze alike the mind and body of his victim. What made his attack more vexatious, every sarcasm took effect amid the plaudits of his audience. He called himself, on one occasion, a tomahawker and a scalper, and true to the race, from which he sprung, he never explained away or took back anything; and, as he knew the private as well as the public history of every prominent member, it was



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impossible for his opponents to foresee from what quarter, and on whom his attacks would fall. He also had political accounts of long standing to settle with sundry individuals, and none could tell when the day of reckoning would arrive. And, when it did come, it was a stern and fearful one. What unnerved his opponents, was a conviction of his invulnerability, apparent or real; for, unconnected as he was by any social relation, and ready to fall back on a colossal fortune, he was not on equal terms with men who were struggling to acquire a competency, and whose hearts were bound by all the endearing ties of domestic love. Moreover, it was impossible to answer a sneer or a sarcasm with an argument. To attempt anything of the kind was to raise a laugh at one's expense. Hence the strong and the weak in a contest with him were upon the same level. In early youth, the face of Mr. Randolph was beautiful, and its lineaments are in some degree preserved in his portrait by Stuart; but, as he advanced in life, it lost its freshness, and began to assume that aspect which the poet Moore described in his diary as a young-old face, and which is so faithfully portrayed by Harding. His voice, which was one of the great sources of his power, ranged from tenor to treble; it had no bass notes; its volume was full at times, but, though heard distinctly in the hall and the galleries, it had, doubtless, lost much of the sweetness and roundness of its earlier years. Its sarcastic tones were on a high key. He was, too, though he had the art to conceal his art from common observers, a consummate actor. In the philosophy of voice and gesture, and in the use of the pause, he was as perfect an adept as ever trod the boards of Covent Garden or Drury Lane. When he described Chapman Johnson as stretching his arm to intercept and clutch the sceptre, as it was passing over Rock Fish Gap, or, when he rallied him for speaking not, 'fifteen minutes as he promised, but two hours, not by Shrewsbury Clock, but by as good a watch as can be made in the City of London,' and, opening the case of his hunting watch, held it up to the view of the Chairman; or, when seeking to deride the length of Johnson's speech, he said, 'The Gentleman said yesterday, or the day before, or the day before that,' Garrick or Kean would have crowned his acting with applause. No weight of character, no grade of



intellect afforded a shield impenetrable by his shaft. Probably the committee, to which was referred, near its close, all the resolutions of the Convention, with a view of having them drawn in the form of a Constitution, was the most venerable in years, in genius, in all the accomplishments of the human mind, and in length and value of public service, that ever sat on this side of the Atlantic. Madison, Marshall, Tazewell, Doddridge, Watkins Leigh, Johnson and Cooke were the seven members who composed it. Yet Mr. Randolph, almost without an effort, raised a laugh at their expense. It appears, if I am not mistaken, that some qualification of the right of suffrage, which was embraced in the resolutions, was not to be found in the reported draft, and to this omission Mr. Randolph called the attention of the House. Mr. Leigh observed that, if Mr. Randolph's views were carried out, it would virtually leave the entire regulation of the right of suffrage to the General Assembly. Randolph replied, with all his peculiar emphasis and gesture, 'Sir, I would as soon trust the House of Burgesses of the Commonwealth of Virginia as the Committee of Seven.' I followed his finger, and, amid the roar of laughter, which burst forth, I saw Mr. Madison and Mr. Leigh suddenly and unconsciously bow their heads. He idolized Shakespeare, and cherished a taste for the drama; and, in this department of literature, as well as in that of the older English classics from Elizabeth to Anne, and, indeed, in all that was embraced by the curiosity and taste of a scholar, his library was rich. He spoke and wrote the English language in all its purity and elegance, and his opponents had at least the gratification of knowing that they were abused in good English; indeed, Madison could not vie with him in a full and ready control over the vocabulary or the harmony of the English tongue. His later speeches exemplify this remark in a more striking manner than his earlier ones. In his speech on Retrenchment, delivered in the House of Representatives in 1828, one meets with sentences of great beauty, and it may be observed that, towards the close of that speech, is one of the few pathetic touches to be found in his productions. Yet it may well be doubted whether his speeches will hold a high place in aftertimes. His sayings will be quoted in the South; and

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some of his speeches will undoubtedly be read; but they will hardly emerge beyond Mason and Dixon's line, and never reach, even within that limit, the dignity of models. What Sir James McIntosh observed to an American respecting one of his speeches, will probably convey, when oral tradition grows faint, the impression which they make on impartial minds—that there was a striving after effect—a disposition to say smart or hard things beyond the ability. On the score of argument, they were beneath criticism. It is but just, however, to say that Mr. Randolph protested against the authenticity of most of the speeches attributed to him. Those in the published debates of the Convention are undoubtedly authentic, and must have received his revisal.”<sup>1</sup>

In another place, in the same discourse, Grigsby speaks of “the rich soprano” of Randolph.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Va. Conv. of 1829-30*, 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 77.

## CHAPTER V

### **Randolph's District**

It was thought by some, who had heard Randolph both in Congress and on the hustings, that he particularly excelled on the hustings<sup>1</sup>; and, happily for us, Powhatan Bouldin, a native of Charlotte County, was forehanded enough, before the besom of time had swept away all of Randolph's contemporaries in his old Congressional District, to collect from some of the most prominent of them a remarkably well-written series of recollections relating to him. After reading these papers, we are at no loss to know just what the Rev. James Waddell Alexander, who was the pastor from 1826–1828 of the Presbyterian Church at Charlotte Court House, meant when he said that Randolph was the Magnus Apollo of Southside Virginia. Indeed, the writer of these pages can testify that, as late as his early manhood, the clang of that silver bow was almost as real to the ear of his generation as it had been to that of Randolph's. How far Randolph is still the subject of popular conversation in Charlotte County, he cannot affirm, but he knows that, 45 years ago, a group of lawyers could hardly gather about a tavern table at Charlotte Court House, or a group of planters assemble on its court green, without bearing witness in their talk, in some way or other, to the ineffaceable imprint made by Randolph upon the minds of those who had seen and heard him. And never, too, did we

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 55.

hear anyone, who had known or seen Randolph, even if it were only an aged negro whom he had chided for blocking his road, recall any words uttered by him without attempting to imitate the tone of the high-pitched, epicene voice which was the most remarkable of his physical attributes. Forty-five years ago, enough time had elapsed for the Southside Virginia Elijah, Patrick Henry, and his chariot of fire to melt away from the sight of the populace into what Prof. Tyndall calls "the infinite azure of the past," but the mantle, that Henry dropped in his ascent from his own shoulders upon those of Randolph, had too recently fallen from the latter for Randolph not to be yet a living presence. We cannot undertake to assert with our fellow-countryman, Bouldin, that "Mr. Randolph was perhaps the most impressive man that ever lived."<sup>1</sup> Southside Virginia, after all, is but a small part of the entire terrestrial globe, the canvass of universal history is very densely peopled, and the assertion imposes entirely too severe a strain upon the mental organs of memory and comparison; but there can be no doubt that few men have ever so completely enslaved the imagination of a people as did Randolph that of the people among whom he lived. They felt in him such a degree of curious interest as they felt in no other man: "In their views," as one of them has told us, Randolph was "as prominent and necessary an object in our human world as the sun in the solar system."<sup>2</sup> "All the bastard wit of the country," Randolph once complained, "has been fathered on me."<sup>3</sup> (a) Every word of his speeches was followed by his constituents so intently that some of them carried whole paragraphs from them in their memories for years. His witticisms, his gibes, his eloquent appeals, his pictorial imagery, his witty sayings were in almost as general circulation among them as the federal currency; and, if he had not been a man of genius,

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 84.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. I, preface vii.

with a training and faculties marvelously well adapted to the office of hitting their local convictions, predilections, and prejudices between wind and water, his landed and social importance, his strange aspect, his erratic bearing, his pride and violence were enough in themselves to have made him an object of insatiable wonder to them. From first to last, he exerted a fascinating spell over them. Once only was this spell sufficiently weakened to cost him his seat in the House; and then, without any recantation or apology on his part, it soon reasserted its sway as if it had never been dissolved. The idea that Randolph secured his election to Congress, term after term, by bullying the young men and cajoling the old men in his District, is too shallow on its face to require serious refutation. He was again and again elected to Congress because the electorate that elected him was limited to a small, intelligent body of freeholders, who admired his talents too much to be influenced by secondary considerations of any kind affecting his general popularity, and who wished to be represented in Congress by a man so truly typical of their own sectional and class interests and aims; and because, before Randolph's mind became chronically deranged in the latter years of his life and both his body and soul steeped in their bitter misery, his rare social gifts made him a welcome companion at every place of public resort and an honored guest in every conspicuous home of his District. The scope of the social activities, which brought these gifts into play during the relatively vigorous years of a life which, like that of Alexander Pope, was "one long disease," is fully disclosed by his Diary and letters. Like all masterful public men, he asserted his will at times imperiously, and more than once, under exceptional circumstances, even brutally. It must be admitted too that, under the *viva voce* mode of voting, which prevailed in Virginia in Randolph's time, intimidation could be more readily practiced at an election by an aggressive, overawing

nature than it could be in our day; (*a*) but the idea that Randolph coerced and coaxed his way into Congress biennially, with the exception of two terms, for some 30 years rests upon nothing more satisfactory than the assertions of political or personal enmity, or the countryside gossip which gave a sensational or exaggerated turn to even the simplest things that such an original man as he might do or say. No man, Randolph was in the habit of declaring, ever had such constituents as he had had. And the declaration was not far from the truth, when tested by ordinary standards of popular attachment and constancy; but it was still nearer the truth, when tested by ordinary standards of popular curiosity and enthusiasm. When the announcement had gone out in one of the counties of Randolph's District that he would address the People on the next County Court Day, the morning of that day was sure to find the Court House green thronged with a great mass of human beings, drained from all the surrounding country, and tense with anxious expectancy until the stir and murmur, which spring up in a crowd—no man can ever tell how—just before what it awaits breaks upon its vision, apprised even the dullest of them that their political idol, the far-famed descendant of King Powhatan and William Randolph of Turkey Island, astride one of his fleet thoroughbreds, or behind one of his sure-footed roadsters, with his favorite negro servant, John, on horseback forty paces in his rear, was nearing the spot; though still invisible to their straining sight, and that he would soon be speaking to them in the shrill voice distinguishable above the uproar of a thousand throats, and yet so musical that it made music of the commonest words. Once arrived, his coming was followed by a surging movement of the multitude towards and around him as if no man among them had ever seen him before, and their eyes were cups to drink with. And, when conducted by an escort of elderly retainers, he ascended the

rostrum, and removed his hat from his head, and made his graceful bow, all business in the village was suspended, its "stores" were closed, and proprietors, clerks, and customers alike poured out of them pell-mell, and hurried across the muddy or dusty highway to swell the auditory already assembled about the speaker. Under such circumstances, oratory became a fixed institution in the habits of a community; not only a powerful agency of popular education but of popular entertainment as well. A speaker must have been an inert lump of clay, indeed, not to have imbibed some additional inspiration on such an occasion, and the memory of an audience must have been like shifting sand not to have retained a lasting impression of much that was said on it. Crowded centres of population had their theatres, their concerts, their lyceums, their many other sources of popular recreation and enjoyment. The theatre, the lyceum of Virginia was the court-green rostrum. Hence it was, along with the free spirit of her people, and the proud position that she had in the earlier stages of our national existence, because of her preponderant wealth and population, that the art of public speaking was so generally practiced, and so highly prized, and early attained such a singular pitch of perfection within her limits. "The Virginians are the best orators I ever heard," was the conclusion that the youthful William Ellery Channing, who was to acquire fame as an orator himself, reached when he was writing from Virginia to New England in 1799.<sup>1</sup> More remarkable still, in his letters, the Rev. James Waddell Alexander, who was as good a judge of eloquence as any man of his time, says: "I have always considered this region of Virginia [Southside Virginia] more favorable to the highest popular eloquence than any other. There are twenty men in this county [Charlotte] whose elocution is enviable."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Wm. Ellery Channing*, v. 1, 96.

<sup>2</sup> March 10, 1842, 40 *Yrs.* *Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 351.

*Suffert in una civitate esse unum rhetorem*, was a cynical maxim that found little favor in Virginia. Towards the end of his life, the homage shown Randolph by his constituents became so eager at times as to irritate him. "I am neither a lion nor a tiger," was his impatient rebuke from the depths of his carriage, on one occasion, to a gaping throng, which had collected about it, when he was leaving the door of the tavern at Charlotte Court House.<sup>1</sup> In 1833, when his carriage came to a stop in front of the tavern at Buckingham Court House, it was immediately surrounded by a dense crowd, and the circumstance was so annoying to him that when his servant was in the act of opening the door of the carriage, so that he could issue from it, he abruptly commanded him to let it remain closed until the crowd should retire; adding that he was no wild beast, intended for public exhibition.<sup>2</sup> To this intense, not to say morbid, interest in Randolph, when he was living, was due the fact that the popular memory in his District remained such a rich treasury of information in regard to him so many years after his death.

Randolph's Congressional District was composed of Buckingham and Cumberland Counties, which are bounded on the north by the James River; Charlotte County, which is bounded on the south by the Staunton River, and Prince Edward County, which lies between Charlotte County and the two counties first named. From its northernmost point of extension to its southernmost was about 78 miles; and its total area was 2,159 square miles.<sup>3</sup> With the exception of some level stretches here and there, its surface is fretted by the last undulations of the Alleghanies before they flatten out into the great coastal plain of Tidewater Virginia; but only in Willis' mountain, the lonely cone in Buckingham County, which teased the eye of Jefferson at Monticello, forty miles away, with its optical

<sup>1</sup> Scrap Book of Ellen Bruce Baylor.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 161

<sup>3</sup> *Martin's Gazetteer*, 133, 145, 160, 265.



vagaries, Ferguson's mountain in the same county, and several other less well-known elevations does this surface assume a mountainous character. Aside from certain sterile and desolate ridges in Buckingham County, and some other more or less haggard tracts of country, the soil of this territory readily responds to good treatment. In Randolph's time, as today, a vast portion of it was covered with woods, and it is most abundantly watered by many copious streams; the James on its way to Turkey Island, the home of William Randolph, and Cawsons, the birth-place of John Randolph himself; the Staunton, on which Roanoke was situated; the Appomattox, which flows by Bizarre, Matoax, and Cawsons, the first three homes of Randolph; Slate River, which rises in the southern part of Buckingham County and empties into the James 63 miles above Richmond; Willis' River, which rises in the southern part of Buckingham County and joins the James 23 miles below the mouth of Slate River;<sup>1</sup> and the Falling River, which debouches into the Staunton hard by Red Hill, the home of Patrick Henry. Smaller streams are Great Guinea and Angle Creeks in Cumberland County; Buffalo Creek in Prince Edward County, on which Judith Randolph owned a tract of land; and the Little Roanoke, which was the western boundary of Randolph's Lower Quarter at Roanoke; Cub Creek, near which was situated Cub Creek Church that was one of the advance posts of early Virginia Presbyterianism, and was at one time under the charge of Dr. Archibald Alexander, and, at another, of Dr. John Holt Rice; and Turnip Creek, which finds its way into the Staunton across alluvial meadows, almost as rich as the delta of the Mississippi, that were, after Randolph's time, but, before the abolition of Southern slavery, to become the basis of the Staunton Hill plantation, owned and organized by Charles Bruce, the son of James Bruce, of Halifax County, Va., one of Randolph's friends, which was

<sup>1</sup> *Martin's Gazetteer*, 134.

long a typical example in the South of what Industry and Social Life, under the institution of Slavery, were at their best. We are thus particular in mentioning these different streams because almost all of them were associated with the life of Randolph in some personal way or other, and because the larger of them, before the construction of the James River and Kanawha Canal and steam railroads, performed a highly important function for the people in Randolph's District in furnishing them with highways for the exportation and importation of commodities. Moist river and creek bottoms, enriched by the nitrogen and lime, brought down by freshets from forest floors and limestone ledges, were also things of no mean importance in communities, too sparsely settled for intensive agriculture. The James River was navigable by bateaux from Buckingham County to Richmond; Willis' River (or canal rather it should have been called), though it never leaves the two counties of Buckingham and Cumberland in its course from its fountains, in the southern part of Buckingham county, to its point of junction with the James, would appear to have been navigable by bateaux for a distance of sixty-five miles from its mouth;<sup>1</sup> the Appomattox, a narrow, but comparatively deep, stream, was navigable by bateaux from Farmville to Petersburg, a distance of some eighty-eight miles; and the Staunton was navigable by similar craft from Roanoke to Weldon in North Carolina. The significance that such streams had in the economic life of Southside Virginia may be inferred, when the reader is told that, at one time, the project was entertained of making a navigable water course of even Buffalo Creek, an insignificant stream, in conjunction with the Little Roanoke, and was abandoned only when an engineer had made a survey, and reported that it was impracticable.<sup>2</sup> The climate of Randolph's District, especially that of its southern end, is considerably softer than the climate of Northern

<sup>1</sup> *Martin's Gazetteer*, 134.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 265.

Virginia. Randolph seems to have had no fondness for flowers. Beyond his request that Dr. Dudley should plant at Roanoke two common specimens of the flora of Charlotte County, there is not a reference in his Diary or letters to one, so far as we can recall. To him, therefore, we cannot look for any of those tell-tale jottings about the vernal return of bud or bloom, which in writings, fuller of the sap of nature, disclose so much in regard to climate. The fact is all the more remarkable, as, in both his Diary and other journals, he kept an elaborate thermometrical record of the weather for weeks at a time. We only know that Randolph had no good opinion of the Southside Virginia climate; notwithstanding the fact that it is certainly, as compared with climates in similar latitudes, notably free from rawness in winter and mugginess in summer. In a letter to his niece, on one occasion, he mentioned a recent fall of  $14^{\circ}$  in the thermometer, at Roanoke, and said: "Such a climate may suit red men but not white ones. Even for blacks, it is too cold in winter. The sensible cold here far exceeds that of Siberia."<sup>1</sup> In a subsequent letter to Francis Walker Gilmer, he says: "Milton's description of Hell in the second book is just suited to the climate" [of Roanoke];<sup>2</sup> and, in another letter to Gilmer, favorably contrasting the constant heat of Arabia and Guinea, bad as it was, with violent fluctuations of temperature in "Massachusetts Bay," he observes: "I am more and more convinced that this climate will amply avenge upon the whites the cruel wrongs done upon the red men."<sup>3</sup> After his return from Russia, in one of his letters to Andrew Jackson, he said that he was turning all his property into money as fast as he could that he might escape the next year, if he should survive, from a climate worse than that of Russia. "A climate where we have a Greenland winter and an African summer in lati-

<sup>1</sup> Aug. 9, 1823, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> July 2, 1825, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> July 30, 1825, Bryan MSS.

tude 37° north—the latitude of Algiers.”<sup>1</sup> And, when the author was a boy, it was said in Charlotte County that Randolph once declared that to live in such a climate as that of Southside Virginia was like being in a great hammock, swung backwards and forwards between the Torrid and Arctic Zones. “This day must have emigrated from the Northwest coast of Scotland,” he once wrote to Dr. Dudley, from Bowling Green, Virginia.<sup>2</sup> But Randolph, the reader will remember, was a man without a skin; and his health, besides, was so delicate that he was for that reason too a poorer judge of temperature than the ordinary individual.

Indeed, it is not to Randolph in any respect that we should go for appreciation of the physical features of Southside Virginia. He was not insensible to natural beauty. Far from it. It is said that he once spent the night upon the Peaks of Otter, in Bedford County, Virginia, for the purpose of seeing the sunrise of the next morning, and that when, with the return of dawn, the most splendid object in the field of human vision rose above the earth-rim in the glorious vesture of its first hour, and began its ascent of the Heavens, he turned to his servant and charged him “never from that time to believe anyone who told him there was no God.”<sup>3</sup> (a) The story is not improbable; for we know from one of Randolph's journals that he did visit the Peaks of Otter on Sept. 11, 1818,<sup>4</sup> and the exhortation is quite in his vein; but the loneliness of his life at Roanoke subdued his feelings too closely to its own sombre cast to leave him much disposition to admire its natural setting. The physical beauty of the country south of the James, however, does not lack its votaries. In his *Famous Americans of Recent Times*, James Parton speaks of it as “an enchanting region,” and says that “a

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 19, 1831, *Jackson Papers*, v. 79, Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 139.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. Colls. of Va.*, by Henry Howe, 190.

<sup>4</sup> Libr. Cong.

country better adapted to all good purposes of man, nor one more pleasing to the eye, hardly exists on earth."<sup>1</sup> But it must not be forgotten that he was writing shortly after the Civil War—that mighty refracting mirror—and he is praising the country partly for the purpose of more effectively belittling its inhabitants; and it must be confessed, too, that, if his praise was intended to apply to the whole of the territory south of the James, it is not praise but flattery; for, after the last ripples set up by the Alleghanies die out in their eastward movement, much of the face of the land becomes very flat, lifeless, and dreary, and, some of it mere pine barrens. Limit Parton's tribute, however, to the more highly-favored portions of Southside Virginia, such, for instance, as the Valley of the Staunton, from Brookneal in Campbell County to Roanoke, and it is near enough the truth to pass muster creditably. The broken territory in Southside Virginia is, naturally speaking, truly a fair land; a land of bold hills, peaceful valleys, and sylvan labyrinths, and of life-giving rivers, creeks, and "branches"; a land where the fervor of a hot sun unites with an abundant rainfall and a kindly soil to reward every earnest effort of the husbandman. The only serious blights upon it in Randolph's time were slavery and the mosquito; the slavery which in 1831 produced the Nat Turner insurrection that in the brief space of a few hours resulted in the butchery of more than three score white men, women, and children; and the mosquito which made every mill-pond a community grievance. Through the letters of Dr. James Waddell Alexander, we obtain some very interesting glimpses of natural conditions in Charlotte County during the latter years of Randolph's life. On Feb. 16, 1827, he wrote to Dr. Hall, his Northern correspondent: "The Crocus and Persian Iris are in bloom and the frogs begin to sing, so that you may judge of the difference of climate."<sup>2</sup> Of course, this was a pre-

<sup>1</sup> P. 184.<sup>2</sup> V. I, 97.

cocious season. And on March 13, 1827, he wrote to the same person:

"We are now enjoying spring in all its sweetness. I am sitting with opened windows into which the 'Sweet South' is breathing. Our gardens are redolent with vernal fragrance, the time of the singing of birds has come, and no country can boast of more charms in this respect than Virginia. The wood lark and the mocking bird are songsters of the first order. Read a graphic description of the latter in Wilson's Ornithology. They are sometimes taken to the North in cages, but in that case you seldom hear the rich gushing of their natural strains, as when they sit among the hawthorn bushes and pour out melody for hours. The plows are all now in motion."<sup>1</sup>

And how, indeed, like the breath of the Sweet South stealing over a bank of violets, and bringing back the sensations and emotions of youth to even the most palsied consciousness, is this Springtide letter too:

"I must pause to tell you (what you certainly could never find out for yourself) that the birds are making melody this day in a manner more exquisite than usual. Be it known to you as a matter of the utmost importance that I am a most enthusiastic admirer of the singing of birds, and that I live in a region where I enjoy this sort of pleasure in perfection. I often stop for half an hour to listen to that most capricious, sweet, jovial, fascinating musician, the mocking bird. Whatever may be the case with the European mimic, it is by no means true of ours that he has no originality. I have never heard the song of any bird comparable to his, and I watch his habits very closely. He is to be found about sunrise upon the topmost twig of the highest tree, swelling and throbbing with the gush of melody, pouring out a stream of song, infinitely varied, of clear, liquid notes, trilled with an inimitable rapidity and wayward changes. No other bird ever excites my laughter, but his imitations are so exact, and so

<sup>1</sup> P. 98.

surprise the other birds, that I am often beguiled into a hearty laugh in my solitary walks. And I have other favorites. The beautiful redbird I have never seen elsewhere. It is of a light, taper shape, of the deepest crimson, except a circle of black velvet on each side of the face. The melancholy whip-poor-will, which begins its monotonous cry at twilight, though its note is not pleasing, has the power of making me listen often for a long time; and even the buzzard, that foulest of fowls, has such a grace and majesty in his sailing among the clouds that I almost forgive him his diet and his stench."<sup>1</sup>

The face of nature has changed but little in Charlotte County since Randolph's death. So, for our purpose, there is no reason why we should not also quote in this connection from the *Familiar Letters* of Dr. Alexander, written after Randolph's death. On March 10, 1842, he wrote to Dr. Hall:

"The weather is mild but pluvius. There have been great freshes here, perhaps 30 during the season. Peas are quite high; peach and plum trees in blossom some days. Birds are pairing, and their number on this estate [Ingleside] is remarkable. Mr. Carrington saw four wild turkey cock on his grounds a day or two ago."<sup>2</sup>

More than 10 years later, Dr. Alexander wrote on the 20th of April:

"The spring no longer coquets but embraces with Oriental voluptuousness. Yesterday, would have done for Florida. In a north porch, in shade, the glass stood at 95° all the afternoon. This morning it is less burning but still hot. When I arrived in Virginia, the spring was still behind, but, for two days, we have almost seen it growing. . . . Before breakfast, I counted 14 species of birds known to me, and two unknown. There are about 50 mocking birds in and about this lawn, and 40 robins were counted on the grass at once."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Apr. 10, 1827, v. 1, 102-103.

<sup>2</sup> V. 1, 350.

<sup>3</sup> Apr. 20, 1855, v. 1, 207.



In a letter to the author, dated Oct. 12, 1919, William Beebe, the brilliant naturalist of our own time, informs him that, some years ago, he drew up a list of 76 different species of birds which he had noted at the home in Charlotte County, about 13 or so miles from Roanoke, of Mr. Henry C. Rice, the son of Dr. Izard Rice, who left behind him an interesting paper relating to Randolph. All of these species were, doubtless, observed by Randolph at Roanoke. In July, 1818, he wrote to Francis W. Gilmer:

"I wish you could come and listen to my concert; it is far superior to Mrs. French's or Mr. Philipps'; I would show you too the invisible bird (the woodthrush), as a certain philosopher [Jefferson] in his manner calls it. There are dozens on my lawn besides doves, summer red-birds, cardinals, etc., etc., to say nothing of squirrels and hares. Now and then a red fox; sometimes a gray one is to be seen at the gate, but the wolf never."<sup>1</sup>

A few years later, Randolph wrote to his niece: "I assure you my shades are as cool, as free from dust, as Bush Hill [the residence of Judge Coalter near Richmond]; and as for noises, I hear none but the warbling of the birds and the barking of the squirrels around my windows."<sup>2</sup>

The population of Randolph's District in 1800, the year after his first election to Congress, was 21,253 whites, 598 free blacks, and 24,251 slaves, or a total of 46,102 persons; in 1830, the last census year before his death, it was 21,853 whites, 1283 free blacks, and 36,264 slaves, or a total of 59,400 persons. Its density, therefore, for the 2,159 square miles over which it was diffused, was in 1800 about 22 persons to the square mile, and, in 1830, about 27. The figures that we give also show that, during the 30 years between 1800 and 1830, the rate of increase among the whites was about 3%, among the free blacks about 114%, and among the slaves about 49%. Ominous percentages

<sup>1</sup> Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, June 12, 1821, Bryan MSS.



over which Randolph must have often brooded in his hours of depression at Roanoke! Since his day, the population in his District has undergone a sensible decline; being less by 4,950 inhabitants in 1910 than it was in 1830, 80 years before—a fact due partly to the terrible industrial stagnation, produced by a variety of special causes, which prevailed in Virginia between 1820 and 1830; the lure of the Virgin West, and the feverishly active cotton-fields of the South Atlantic and Gulf States, during the decades between 1830 and 1860; the havoc and derangement occasioned by the Civil War, and the competition with the rich lands of our own Western territory and of foreign lands opened up by the steam car and the steamship; but, above all, to the mildew of *der Ewige Neger*, first as an ignorant, listless, and immoral slave, in one sense wholly impotent, and yet powerful enough to assert his influence over the very speech of his owner's children, and, afterwards, as a freedman, free from his former master but still enslaved to his former self. (a) Today, in this region, the salutary transition from the old Plantation System, with its slave or hired labor and other features, to small tenant or proprietary holdings, which has been going on steadily for many years, is at last complete, and there is good reason to believe that, in process of time, a new industrial and social organization, built up exclusively around the principle of selfhelp, as all truly thrifty and lasting social and industrial organizations are, instead of that of feudal overlordship, noble and gracious in many respects as its spirit was, will take the place of the one that existed in Randolph's time, and even for a considerable period after the Civil War; and that the territory, represented by Randolph in Congress, will cease to wear the look that it has worn for so many years of a sick stag shedding its antlers or of a human being overtaken by the decrepitude of age before he has attained his majority.

“The influence of slavery, united to the English char-

acter, explains the manners and the social condition of the Southern States."<sup>1</sup> The truth of this *dictum* of De Tocqueville was aptly exemplified in Randolph's District. The leading landowners of that part of Virginia, such as the Randolphs, the Harrisons, the Skipwiths, and the Carringtons, were merely English gentry modified by the plantation. Edward Dillon and Dr. Thomas Robinson, of Prince Edward County, two of Randolph's friends, who were British-born, fitted into the social life of Southside Virginia as smoothly as if they had been native Virginians. Writing to Dr. Hall from England in 1857, Dr. James Waddell Alexander said that the general look of the English lords reminded him of Virginia gentlemen; quite so, as far as manner was concerned; only the Virginia gentlemen were not so neat in point of dress as most of them.<sup>2</sup> The resemblance had been previously noted by Randolph himself. In a letter to his niece, written in England on May 27, 1822, he said: "The higher ranks, a few despicable and despised fashionables excepted, are as unpretending and plain as our old-fashioned Virginia gentlemen whom they greatly resemble."<sup>3</sup> *Mutatis mutandis*, the ambitions, tastes, and pastimes of the Virginia gentleman in Southside Virginia, or any other portion of slave-holding Virginia, were all those of the English country gentleman. To own and manage a plantation, well stocked with negroes and spirited horses, in the heart of some leafy wilderness, to hand around the plate in his roadside church on Sunday, as vestryman or elder, to sit upon the bench of his county court, or to represent his county in the State Legislature, or his District in Congress, and, when not engrossed with these cares, to fox-hunt, shoot quail or "partridges," as he called them,

<sup>1</sup> De Tocqueville, v. 1, 36, Cambridge, 1864 (4th ed.).

<sup>2</sup> London, July, 3, 1857, 40 *Yrs' Familiar Letters*, by Dr. J. W. Alexander (N. Y., 1860), v. 2, 246.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 2, 184.

and other game, frequent horse races, and dine with his friends were the objects which he usually placed before himself as promising a human being the highest degree of gratification and happiness. In the breast of every such Virginian, at the beginning of life, if he was not so fortunate as to inherit, or expect to inherit, such a plantation, was the resolve to realize his ideal of perfect felicity by sooner or later buying one and spending the remainder of his days on it in the enjoyment of the rural pleasures, which are among the few human pleasures that leave no bitter taste in the mouth. When his object was attained, the life he led was certainly an agreeable one; for it was even agreeable enough to make John Mitchel, the Irish patriot, zealous as he was for Irish freedom, sigh for a "good plantation well stocked with fat, healthy negroes."<sup>1</sup>

The class, of which we speak, had its share of human infirmities, of course, but it can be truly said of it that it is not dependent upon its own commendation for a proper acknowledgment of its conspicuous virtues. Referring to the landed gentry of Virginia in 1789, Anburey says:

"The first class [of the Virginians] consists of gentlemen of the best families and fortunes which are more respectable and numerous than in any other province; for the most part they have had a liberal education, possess a thorough knowledge of the world, with great ease and freedom in their manners and conversation. Many of them keep their carriages, have handsome services of plate, and, without exception, keep their studs as well as sets of handsome carriage horses."<sup>2</sup>

It was to this class that Randolph himself belonged; and, while the stately tidewater opulence which Anburey describes, was out of keeping with the simpler social conditions and the more modest measure of individual wealth, on the whole, which afterwards obtained in Randolph's

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Travels Through the Interior Parts of America*, Anburey, 372.

District in Randolph's time, it was not sufficiently so to render the description altogether inapplicable to it. The four counties, which constituted Randolph's District, were, it should be remembered, settled after Tidewater Virginia, and never became endowed with such a degree of wealth, or permeated with such a degree of aristocratic pride, as the riparian communities on the James. The whole framework of their social organization, though essentially the same, was distinctly barer and less pretentious, if, for no other reason, because their struggle with primeval nature came along later.

Anburey also noted that all Virginians were fond of horses, from Thomas Mann Randolph, of Tuckahoe, who built a stable for his favorite Shakspeare, with a recess in it for the bed of the negro who kept watch over him day and night,<sup>1</sup> to the humblest member of "the middling and lower classes," who gratified his passion for horseflesh by attending the "quarter races," which went on almost unremittingly at the cross-roads tavern, or ordinary, as it was called in Virginia—a name which Anburey thought fully deserved.<sup>2</sup> That this fondness for horses still continued to exist in Southside Virginia throughout Randolph's life, we need no better proof than is to be found in the assiduous attention which he gave to his own stud at Roanoke, and the celebrity which his friend, Wm. R. Johnson, the famous turfman, who resided at Oakland, in Chesterfield County, acquired throughout the United States. During Johnson's career, Petersburg, which was but a few miles from Oakland, was one of the most popular racing centers in the country. "In spite of the Virginian love for dissipation, the taste for reading is commoner there among men of the first class than in any other part of America," declared the Duc de Liancourt at the close of the Eighteenth Century. This statement anyone, who has read the remarkable debates in the Virginia Consti-

<sup>1</sup> Anburey, *supra*, 360.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 393.

tutional Convention of 1829-30, can readily credit. All of the first library, accumulated by Randolph at Bizarre, which appears to have been quite a valuable one, was destroyed by fire<sup>1</sup>; but, at his death, he had accumulated at Roanoke one of the most valuable private libraries in the United States. "I blush for my own people when I compare the selfish prudence of a Yankee with the generous confidence of a Virginian," wrote Wm. Ellery Channing in 1799 from Richmond, when he was teaching in the family of David Meade Randolph:

"Here I find great vices but greater virtues than I left behind me. There is one single trait which attaches me to the people I live with more than all the virtues of New England—they *love money less* than we do; they are more disinterested; their patriotism is not tied to their purse-strings. Could I only take from the Virginians their sensuality and their slaves, I should think them the greatest people in the world. As it is, with a few great virtues, they have innumerable vices."<sup>2</sup>

Generous words on the whole—all the more generous because of the crust of prejudice through which they had to break their way—that might well have elicited a responsive tribute from some Southern pen to the sterling virtues of the New England character. Laying aside all invidious comparisons, the almost un murmuring fortitude, with which Virginia bore the load of restrictive fatuity, imposed by Jefferson upon her industry, and the glow of resentful patriotism, which, during the war of 1812, was too much for even Randolph's prestige in his District, would appear to bear out the general tenor of what Channing says in one respect. Forty years later, William Cullen Bryant, another New Englander, expressed the opinion that "whatever may be the comparison in other respects, the South certainly has the advantage over us in point of manners."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoir of W. E. C.*, v. 1, 82.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. of U. S.*, by Adams, v. 1, 132

"The time has not yet come," said Josiah Quincy in 1892, "to estimate with impartiality the class of Southern gentlemen, to which Randolph belongs. Many of them were men of great ability and singular fascination of manner."<sup>1</sup> "There is a suavity and grace in the manners of gentlemen of the first rank in this state and a peculiar fascination in their elocution," wrote Dr. James Waddell Alexander to Dr. Hall from Petersburg, "which you will understand better if you have ever seen Tazewell, Clay or John Randolph."<sup>2</sup> (a)

Of the upper-class Virginians, who resided in Randolph's District and in other parts of Southside Virginia adjacent to it, we obtain many pleasing views in his journals and letters. It is a fact not usually realized that, while the primary education of the general mass of the Virginia people before the Civil War fell lamentably below the standard at which Jefferson, with his catholic sympathies, aimed, and Massachusetts actually attained, academic and collegiate education was more common in Virginia than in any other State of the Union.<sup>3</sup> After the Revolution, young men in Southside Virginia, of the same class as Randolph, were usually educated at William and Mary, Princeton, and Hampden-Sidney College, in Prince Edward County. To the latter institution, especially, which has been maintained, at times, under circumstances of extreme discouragement, the people of Southside Virginia are deeply indebted. How true this is a brief glance at the names of the many distinguished and useful men who derived their intellectual nurture from its teaching will clearly establish. After leaving college, Southside Virginia contemporaries of Randolph, who occupied the same social station as himself, settled down, some to purely professional pursuits, but the majority wholly, or, in connection with some other vocation, to the life of a planter in the tranquil homes, scattered along the banks

<sup>1</sup> P. 228.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 27, 1826, *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*. v. 1, 93.

<sup>3</sup> *Old Churches, etc., of Va.*, by Meade, 90 (note); *The Cotton Kingdom*, Yale University Press, by Wm. E. Dodd, 111 (note).

of the James, the Appomattox and the Staunton, which were, in most instances, the abodes of a strong religious faith; of an unsullied domestic purity and fidelity; and of a manly dignity and simplicity of bearing in all the ordinary social relationships of life, and, as a rule, of a just sense of responsibility too for the servile beings clustered about them. These houses for the most part were flimsy and plain, in comparison with the "magnificent" mansions in eastern Virginia which excited the admiration of de Chastellux,<sup>1</sup> (a); and the best of them would be regarded as very modest dwellings in our time in point of scope and design; and, in conveniences, according to modern standards, they were almost wholly wanting. But it is land and caste, and not necessarily splendid houses or a fat purse, which make a true aristocracy, and, separated as this class of landowners was, by the impassable gulf of slavery, from the blacks, and by marked social distinctions, based on education and similar principles, from the less fortunate whites, they were a true aristocracy in spirit; though too amenable to the bit of American constitutional restraints ever to get out of friendly and sympathetic touch with the poorer whites. So far as wealth was concerned, their good fortune was mainly specious. Slave labor was sadly deficient, of course, in intelligence, energy, and zeal. In consequence, the life of the master was likely to be one long, daily conflict with inefficiency and wastefulness. If he was too lenient, nothing, or next to nothing, was done; if he relied too far upon work extorted by fear, he incurred the reprobation of his more conscientious and easy-going neighbors. It was a saying of Charles Bruce, of Charlotte County, who was the owner of many slaves, that "slavery cheated the master with the semblance of wealth." "A Virginia estate is plenty of serfs, plenty of horses, but not a shilling"<sup>2</sup> Randolph

<sup>1</sup> P. 162, v. 2.

<sup>2</sup> 40 Yrs.' *Familiar Letters*, by Dr. Alexander, v. 1, 356.



declared. During the industrial depression that existed in Virginia between 1820 and 1840, he predicted that, instead of the master advertising for the runaway slave, the slave would soon be advertising for the runaway master. There is a letter among the papers of Creed Taylor from the widow of one of the Randolphs, requesting him as her agent to discharge her debts when her tobacco was sold, and "ask credit until harvest for 25 lbs. white sugar."<sup>1</sup> The shortcomings of slave labor, the many vicissitudes to which growing crops were subject, the exacting spirit of hospitality, created by the free and easy conditions of the old Virginia life, and, as the Virginia planter thought, the tariff burdens, imposed upon agriculture by protection, in the interest of the Northern manufacturer, at times, reduced even such wealthy planters as Randolph himself to straitened circumstances. But, living as the Southside Virginia planter did in the country, and blessed as he was with a genial sun, and a kindly soil and numerous servants, maintainable at small expense, and, in a position, too, as he was to derive almost everything essential to human comfort or convenience from his own property, in many respects, he led a very care-free and delightful life. If he did not have much ready money, he had most of the things for which ready money is reasonably craved; if his dwelling lacked many of the mechanical improvements and labor-saving devices of modern times, the fact did not make much difference when he had so many human mechanisms about him to perform their functions. Writing to Dr. Hall from Charlotte County on May 19, 1826, Dr. James Waddell Alexander said:

"The manners of the people are plain, frank, hospitable and independently proud of their Virginianism and all its peculiarities. I suppose that no set of people in the world live more at their ease, or indeed more luxuriously, so far as

<sup>1</sup> Green Creek, Feb. 20, 1810, Creed Taylor MSS.



eating and drinking are concerned. No farmer would think of sitting down to dinner with less than four dishes of meat or to breakfast without several different kinds of warm bread."<sup>1</sup>

Tested by the criteria of austerer societies, such profusion may not bespeak very high standards of frugality and thrift, but it at least furnishes abundant indications of the animal comfort which, since the day, when Sully hoped to see a chicken in the pot of every peasant, has been the prime requirement of human happiness.

But it would be a grave mistake to think of Randolph's District and its circumjacent territory as a region where little or no thought was paid by anyone to prudential considerations. Many of the Southside Virginians handled little cash from year to year, but others were more fortunate; and a certain amount of accumulation went on in Southside Virginia, as it does in every other community, where "gold, bright and yellow, hard and cold, heavy to get and light to hold" is an object of desire. On March 22, 1814, Randolph wrote to Josiah Quincy from Richmond: "Some of our people, particularly in my quarter of the country, are rich."<sup>2</sup> Indeed, in the same letter, he said that you could almost smell "the rum and cheese, and loaf, lump and muscovado sugar" out of which some mushroom fortunes had sprung. Some four years later, he wrote to Key from Roanoke:

"The state of manners around me cannot be paralleled, I believe, on the face of the earth—all engaged in unremitting devotion in the worship of

'The least erected spirit  
That fell from heaven.'

This pursuit I know to be general throughout the land, indeed, I fear throughout the world; but elsewhere it is tempered by

<sup>1</sup> *Forty Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, by Dr. Alexander, v. 1, 95.

<sup>2</sup> Richmond, Mar. 22, 1814, *Life of Quincy*, p. 352.

the spirit of society and even by a love of ostentation or of pleasure."<sup>1</sup>

On May 19, 1826, writing to Dr. Hall from the vicinity of Charlotte Court House, Dr. James Waddell Alexander said: "This is a rich and fertile region, producing great quantities of prime tobacco, and, of course, growing wealthy."<sup>2</sup> James Bruce, who resided at Woodburn in Halifax County, died in 1837 leaving a fortune of about \$2,000,000.00; a regal one for his day.<sup>3</sup> It was derived from the profits of both trade and planting, and was perhaps one of the few private fortunes in the United States at that time which at all approximated those of Stephen Girard and John Jacob Astor. One of Randolph's neighbors tells us that Randolph declared on one occasion at Roanoke, in the year 1832, that the Nullification crisis was so menacing that he would not take Mr. Girard's or Mr. Bruce's bond for 18c.<sup>4</sup> It is comparatively easy to see how Girard could have amassed his great fortune in Commerce, in such a city as Philadelphia, or John Jacob Astor his in the Fur Trade, but that James Bruce should have acquired a fortune of about \$2,000,000, in the early part of the 19th century, in such a thinly settled, wholly agrarian, country as that traversed by the Staunton River, is a thing that some competent biographer might well undertake to explain. If tradition may be believed, sagacity, integrity, and an equable temper were the main factors that entered into his success; but a highly-developed instinct of prudence seems to have had something to do with it too. "I am *fond*," he wrote on one occasion to a correspondent, "of taking two securities to a bond."<sup>5</sup> (a)

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 95.

<sup>2</sup> 40 Yrs.' *Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 94.

<sup>3</sup> Proceedings in matter of Estate of Jas. Bruce, Clerk's Office, Houston, Va.

<sup>4</sup> Bouldin, 109.

<sup>5</sup> July 6, 1829, J. B. to Parker M. Rice, James Bruce MSS.

Speaking of James Bruce, as he lived in the year 1827, Dr. James Waddell Alexander says in one of his letters to Dr. Hall:

“I have just returned from Halifax. . . . My visit was principally to the family of Mr. Bruce to which I beg leave to introduce you. His house is noted for its hospitality, and presents to the *bon vivant* as great temptations as can well be found in Virginia. At Mr. Bruce’s, we seldom sat down to table during the week I spent there with less than 10 strangers.”<sup>1</sup>

And Dr. Alexander adds: “I also visited Gen. Edward C. Carrington, who has a seat upon Dan River (which with the Staunton forms the Roanoke). . . . He is a scholar and a gentleman and has large possessions.” Berry Hill, the seat of General Carrington, was afterwards purchased before the Civil War, by James C. Bruce, the son of the James Bruce just mentioned, and the home built by him is still standing; and, with its imposing Doric front, flanking subsidiary structures and other striking features, is one of the stateliest and handsomest monuments of the Slave Era in the South. It and Staunton Hill, the home of Charles Bruce, in Charlotte County, built in 1848, are perhaps the most interesting relics in Southside Virginia at the present time of that Era. The display of silver in these two houses would compare favorably with any in the United States today, except in the very wealthiest homes; and the items of silver in the Berry Hill collection even included silver bedroom wash basins and toilet articles.<sup>2</sup> Another spacious and imposing mansion in the region, in which Randolph resided, was Prestwould, in Mecklenburg County, the home of Sir Peyton Skipwith, the father of St. George Tucker’s second wife. Each of these three celebrated mansions stood out

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 16, 1827, *40 Yrs. Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 97.

<sup>2</sup> *Historic Va. Homes*, by Robt. A. Lancaster, Jr., 435.

in *alto rilievo* from its primitive environment upon a background of thousands of acres of land. The estate in Amelia County, to which William B. Giles retired in 1815, when sick and in political eclipse, is thus described by D. R. Anderson in his biography of Giles:

“His spacious plantation of 3,000 acres, with its comfortable mansion, furnished in solid mahogany, adorned with costly silver plate, and equipped with its bountiful supply of stock, shops, mills, dairies and barns, afforded the conveniences and distractions suited for the relief of a wearied body and mind.”<sup>1</sup>

“Rich,” too, if Dr. James Waddell Alexander was not wrong, was more than one branch of the Venable family of Prince Edward County.<sup>2</sup> Banister Lodge, in Halifax County, one of the Clark homes, where Randolph was occasionally a guest; Ingleside, near Charlotte Court House, built in 1810 by Col. Thomas Read; and Green Hill, the home of the Pannills, in Campbell County, are good specimens of the more substantial homes of the Southside Virginia planter in Randolph's time.<sup>3</sup> But houses like these were quite exceptional. As a general thing, the homes in Randolph's District of even the most prominent members of his class had nothing about them to attract the eye either in point of magnitude or architectural finish; though in the vicinity of Petersburg there were “not a few very splendid mansions,” if Dr. James Waddell Alexander has not lauded them too highly.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, some homes in Southside Virginia, that were the seats of a refined and generous hospitality, would not now be considered good enough, in respect to either size or external pretensions, for the superintendent of one of our city parks, or the lodge keeper of one of our opulent mer-

<sup>1</sup> *Wm. Branch Giles*, by Dice Robins Anderson, 210.

<sup>2</sup> *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, by Dr. Alexander, v. 1, 351.

<sup>3</sup> *Lancaster's Historic Va. Homes*, 438, 431, 421.

<sup>4</sup> *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 91.

chants. The truth of what we say will be verified if the reader will turn to the illustrations of Oakland, one of the Cocke homes; Clifton, one of the Harrison homes, and Union Hill, one of the Page homes, in Cumberland County; and Bellmont, one of the Cary homes, in Buckingham County, all seats of families of the very highest social position, which appear in Lancaster's *Historic Virginia Homes and Churches*<sup>1</sup>; a memorable book that deserves the frequent use and praise which it receives. It was not the scale of these homes but the indwelling spirit, bred of ancient family traditions and the genuine sense of superiority, fostered by a highly stratified social order, which made their inmates, however crude or cramped or commonplace their surroundings, quasi-aristocrats.

As such, they had, generally speaking, the virtues which belong to a quasi-aristocracy; a far better thing, at any rate, than any legalized aristocracy; that is to say, pride of character, a nice sense of honor, courage, freedom from sordid passions and vulgar propensities, courtesy and chivalrous deference for womanhood. And their healthful, open-air pursuits and remoteness from the vanities and dissipations of city life, if nothing else, saved them, to a great extent, from the enervation and sensual indulgence which are only too likely to accompany real privilege. What their women were at their best, no reader of ours, familiar with Dr. George W. Bagby's *Old Virginia Gentleman*, or Thomas Nelson Page's inimitable *In Ole Virginia*, can be at a loss to know. No one, we suppose, seriously disputes the fact that the standard of female delicacy and honor, to which the lives of these women were adjusted, was quite as high as any that has ever existed in any civilized society. In saying this, we weigh every word, nay, every syllable as deliberately as John Randolph would have spoken them. The simile of the Southern poet, Daniel B. Lucas, "like violets our virgins

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 175, 186, 185, 187.

pure and tender," haunts the memory of the Virginian, because it is so true to the rich measure of chastity and unselfish affection which inspired it, and we need not go further than John Randolph himself for a winning picture of what the Virginia matron with her distaff was. Speaking in Congress of domestic manufactures, he is reported to have said:

"I have, from a sort of obstinacy, that belongs to me, laid aside the external use of these manufactures, but I am their firm friend, and of the manufacturer also. They are no new things to me; no Merino hobby of the day. I have known them from my infancy. I have been almost tempted to believe from the similarity of character and avocations that Hector had a Virginian wife; that Lucretia herself—for she displayed the spirit of a Virginian matron—was a Virginian lady. Where were they found? Spinning among their handmaids. What was the occupation of a Virginian wife; her highest ambition? To attend to her domestic and household cares; to dispense medicine and food to the sick; to minister to the comfort of her family, her servants and her poor neighbors, where she had any. At the sight of such a woman, his heart bowed down and did her reverence."<sup>1</sup> (a)

And this it did in the case of Mrs. Tabb of Amelia County.

"Poor Mrs. Tabb," he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough, "by the death of Mrs. Coupland is saddled with two more helpless grandchildren. She is the best and noblest creature living; and I pray God that I may live once more to see her—a true specimen of the old Virginia matron."<sup>2</sup>

And we know no verses at which John Quincy Adams, who was an able and accomplished statesman, but whose poetry, as a rule, was as purely mechanical as the rhythm of a creaking saw, ever tried his uninspired hand which

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1811-12, v. 1, 542.

<sup>2</sup> *Garland*, v. 2, 275.

are more readable than these hitherto unpublished ones, dated Aug. 7, 1841, in which, in his old age, he honored with his homage the beautiful presence and lovely spirit of a daughter of Southside Virginia:

“To Miss Ellen B—:

“Oh! wherefore, Lady was my lot  
Cast from thine own so far;  
Why, by kind fortune, live we not  
Beneath one blessed star?  
For had thy thread of life and mine  
But side by side been spun;  
My heart had panted to entwine  
The tissue into *one*.

And why should time conspire with space  
To sever us in twain?  
And wherefore have I run my race  
And cannot start again?  
Thy thread how long! How short is mine!  
Mine spent—thine scarce begun!  
Alas! we never can entwine  
The tissue into *one!*

But take my blessing on thy name;  
The blessing of a sire,  
Not from a lover's furnace flame;  
'Tis from a holier fire;  
A thread unseen beside of thine  
By fairy forms is spun,  
And holy hands shall soon entwine  
The tissue into *one*.”<sup>1</sup>

Next in the social scale, was the class of smaller landowners. They differed from the larger landowners only in that they owned less land, were possessed of less education, and enjoyed less social standing; but they owned enough land to entitle them to exercise the franchise, and

<sup>1</sup> Autograph Book of Mrs. Jas. A. Seddon.

their political and material interests were identical with those of their wealthier and more consequential neighbors.

Then came the landless whites. They were poor and illiterate, but, as a rule, independent in spirit, brave, and honest, and as jealous of female chastity as their social superiors. These virtues they were all the more sedulous to cultivate because they alone, aside from the color of their skins, established any real distinction between them and the negro. Their position was, in many respects, a pathetic one. They had no land themselves; they shrank from laboring side by side with the slaves of those who had; and yet they lived in a community where agriculture was for all practical purposes the sole breast of the State. The result was that they were compelled to earn a more or less precarious subsistence by turning their hands to such uncertain tasks as they could. Since no one could vote, who did not own 25 acres of land in the country, or a city lot, they were without political power, and, for that reason, as well as by reason of their poverty, were regarded with derision by the negro as "po' white trash."

(a) In the same sentence, in which the Duc de Liancourt speaks of the taste of the Virginians of the first class for reading, he adds: "But the populace is perhaps more ignorant there [Virginia] than elsewhere." It was certainly very illiterate in Randolph's District, owing to the want of a proper system of general public education; and to him the barbarous vernacular of the unlettered portion of his fellow-countrymen was always a source of amusement, slightly dashed with derision. In his Diary, he entered the following specimens of their syntax and pronunciation, under the head "Virginiana." No Southside Virginian at any rate can read them today without realizing that Virginia, even under the instruction of her present public schools, is as slow to abjure her native speech as Patrick Henry thought an American ought to be to "abjure his native victuals."



"I happened at Curnull Purnull's, un thah wuz a purdigious stawm that blow'd down all the cawn; but the Curnull give us a heap o' grog, un we sot it up agin.

The gals was agwine to meetin but they war abliged to return back hoame.

Cuffy bresh my coat might clean us I'm agwine a coatin un doan tetch it with yo finguz a'ter you've done; else you'll dutty it.

One chick'n done lawce he ma-am-y.

Cap'n Dannil mecks a famous crop.

A rapid price; i.e. high.

Cuvvawtin (curvetting applied not to a horse but a man).

Skeerd (scared). Sheer (share). Cheer (chair).

He is in a *proper* fix (a bad situation).

He done (did) it out of ambition (i.e. malice—never used in its proper sense) ("ambition," Jul. Caesar, Shaksp.)

He is ruined by paying intruss (i.e. interest).

He attacted (attacked) him about it, and channelged (challenged) him."

And so on.

Nor were barbarisms like these always confined to the lower classes of the whites. "Whoever said 'wuz' but you and the Chief Justice," Randolph exclaimed impatiently on one occasion to a slothful woman who had insisted that "she *wuz* a-making" his coffee. He was referring, of course, to John Marshall.<sup>1</sup>

Then came the free blacks. They occupied a position as equivocal as that which produced the saying of the Haitien blacks that a mulatto hates his father and despises his mother. By the whites, though nominally free, he was not allowed to vote, hold office, or testify against a white man, and was accorded a far more limited measure of social intercourse than the slave, with whom their relations were often intimate and affectionate in the highest degree. In other words, his freedom did not bring him any closer to the superior race, though it sensibly separated

<sup>1</sup> *The True Patrick Henry*, by Geo. Morgan, 33.

him from sympathetic communion with his own. Under such circumstances, a free black found himself greeted on every side by sullen brows and averted looks, and he would have had more moral and intellectual stamina than the white man himself, if he had not frequently become more or less of a thief and a vagabond. Speaking of the slaves, manumitted by Richard Randolph, and relying upon a history of them, published by a Col. Madison, Dr. James Waddell Alexander says: "They have almost become extinct; those who remain are wandering and drunken thieves, degraded below the level of humanity and beyond the reach of gospel means."<sup>1</sup>

This description, we are satisfied, is gloomier than the real facts warranted. During the Slave Era, it was hard to get at the truth about the slaves; and the truth about the free black was with still more difficulty, perhaps, arrived at. The Charlotte County slaves, Dr. James Waddell Alexander thought "unspeakably superior to the Northern free blacks."<sup>2</sup>

And lastly came the slave. Theoretically, he was the mere thrall of his master; his "ox, his ass, his anything," to use the words of Petruchio, with no legal right except that of not being deprived of his life by his master by downright murder. But, apart from his liability to sale and lasting separation from all his family connections and local ties, which was the capital reproach of slavery, his lot in Southside Virginia was by no means a very harsh one. On this point, nothing can be more valuable than the testimony of Dr. James Waddell Alexander, who came to Charlotte County with all the prepossessions of a Northern man against slavery, and resided there for several years in the very closest association with both whites and blacks, and was subsequently in the habit of returning on visits to the locality in which he had resided.

<sup>1</sup> Oct. 19, 1838, *40 Yrs.* *Familiar Letters*, by Dr. Alexander, v. 1, 270.

<sup>2</sup> *40 Yrs.* *Familiar Letters*, by Dr. Alexander, v. 1, 353.

Shortly after reaching Virginia, in a letter to Dr. Hall from Petersburg, he indulged in these interesting reflections:

“The number of blacks which I met in the streets at first struck me with surprise; but now everything has become familiar. When I consider how much of the comfort, luxury and style of Southern gentlemen would be retrenched by the removal of the slave population, I can no longer wonder at the tenacity with which they adhere to their pretended rights. The servants, who wait upon genteel families, in consequence of having been bred among refined people all their lives, have often as great an air of gentility as their masters. The comfort of slaves in this country is greater, I am persuaded, than that of the free blacks as a body in any part of the United States. They are no doubt maltreated in many instances; so are children; but in general, they are well clad, well fed, and kindly treated. Ignorance is their greatest curse, and this must ever follow in the train of slavery. The bad policy and destructive tendency of the system is increasingly felt; you hear daily complaints on the subject from those who have most servants. But what can they do? Slavery was not their choice. They cannot and ought not to turn them loose. They cannot afford to transport them; and generally the negroes would not consent to it. The probable result of this state of things is one which philanthropists scarcely dare contemplate.”<sup>1</sup>

When Dr. Alexander next passed through Petersburg, on his way to Charlotte County, after a vacation at the North for the recovery of his health which had been seriously impaired by “a bilious fever,” he was not quite in the state of body or mind to see things exactly as he had done on his first arrival in Virginia.

“The dirty, gloomy, ugly town of Petersburg,” he says, “presents the same appearance as it did three years ago, when I entered it for the first time. I now perceived that I was in Virginia by the gangs of negroes, some with burdens on

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 27, 1826, 40 Yrs. *Familiar Letters*, Dr. Alexander, v. 1, 93.

their heads, others driving wagons of cotton and tobacco, women arrayed in men's hats, and children with scarcely any raiment at all."<sup>1</sup>

But, when he got back to Charlotte County, and to what he called "the forests, the streams,

'The mossed oaks,  
Which have outlived the eagle,'

of Virginia"<sup>2</sup>; he was soon the captive of the hamadryad again, and again seeing things in his usual way, that is, perhaps, just a little *couleur de rose*. Even on the abolition question there then prevailed, he thought, a moderation much in advance of the temper that he had witnessed less than three years before.<sup>3</sup> This opinion was expressed five years after the death of John Randolph. Some four years later, he reached the interesting conclusion that a gradual emancipation was that to which the interior economy of the North-Southern States was tending, and that which it would reach; that it was inevitable, and that it was craved by thousands of the whites in Southside Virginia.<sup>4</sup> Nor apparently did anything ever happen to make him change his mind on this subject. Two years afterwards, he communicated to Dr. Hall the statement of some Virginian that the opinion was openly expressed every day more and more in his part of Virginia that slavery was a curse economically<sup>5</sup>; and, upwards of ten years later, and only six years before the beginning of the Civil War, he penned these remarkable words:

"I am deeply convinced that a majority of the South will one day come to the point of mitigating slavery, so far as to make it a sort of feudal apprenticeship; and that it will be abolished. Every year—even in the face of Northern rebuke

<sup>1</sup> Nov. 16, 1828, *Id.*, v. 1, 114.

<sup>2</sup> May 11, 1829, *Id.*, v. 1, 128.

<sup>3</sup> Oct. 13, 1838, *Id.*, v. 1, 269.

<sup>4</sup> Mar. 25, 1842, *Id.*, v. 1, 354.

<sup>5</sup> Aug. 21, 1844, *Id.*, v. 1, 400.

—hundreds of new voices are raised in behalf of marriage, integrity of families and license to read. To a practical mind it is striking that abolitionism has abolished no slavery.”<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding his sympathy with the trend of Virginian sentiment in favor of emancipation, Dr. Alexander did not favor immediate emancipation. In 1848, he wrote to Dr. Hall:

“That the most miserable portion, physically and morally, of the black race, in the United States, is the portion which is free, I am as well assured as I can be of any similar proposition. That immediate emancipation would be a crime I have no doubt.”<sup>2</sup>

The abolition agitation, it is also interesting to note, Dr. Alexander held responsible for a most important change in the legislation of Virginia in regard to the slave, which was enacted after he had returned to the North. Writing when on a visit to Charlotte County, he said: “The law (thanks to the meddling of anti-slavery societies) forbids schools and public teaching to read; it was not so when I lived here.”<sup>3</sup> These views, as is well known, were also those of the Rev. Dr. Nehemiah Adams, of Boston, who spent three months, during the decade before the Civil War, in the study of slavery in Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia; and, despite his original prepossessions against it, on his return to Boston, gave this advice to the North: “Hands off! the question is a domestic one best settled by the South, and only delayed and hampered by interference from without.” The idea that the post-revolutionary sentiment in Virginia, in favor of the abolition of slavery, which was so earnestly shared by Washington, Jefferson, Henry and Edmund Randolph, was a mere spasm of *eleutheria*, is not maintainable. Never in an abolition convention was the institution of slavery

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 14, 1856, *Id.*, v. 2, 218.

<sup>2</sup> May 28, 1846, *Id.*, v. 2, 52.

<sup>3</sup> Charlotte C. H., Oct. 19, 1838, *Id.*, v. 2, 272.

more unsparingly denounced than it was in the Virginia Legislature of 1831-32 by some of the most distinguished Virginians of that time; and never was the sense of its dangers, its evils, and its injustice so keen in Virginia as it was when that Legislature all but succeeded in making the proper provision for its gradual termination. Among its opponents in Southside Virginia, were two of the ablest Presidents that Hampden-Sidney College has ever had—William Maxwell and John Holt Rice. Speaking of Maxwell in 1827, Dr. James Waddell Alexander said:

“He is, in my judgment, the very best orator I know anywhere. I have never heard Tazewell, with whom he maintains a successful competition at the bar. Mr. Maxwell is a man of wealth and influence, and he casts both, with great effect, into the scale of Christianity. He is, though a native Virginian, the faithful and fearless champion of the oppressed Africans. For a publication of his on this subject the Norfolk people menaced him with an application of tar and feathers. When he avowed himself the author of the paper, which was published anonymously, his opposers shrunk away before a character so universally revered. He is a bachelor, lives in good style, has an elegant library, is a most agreeable companion and a finished scholar.”<sup>1</sup>

On April 14, 1827, the Rev. Dr. John Holt Rice wrote to the Rev. Dr. Archibald Alexander: “I have long had it as an object, dearest to my heart, to get Virginia free from Slavery”<sup>2</sup>; and, in the same letter, reading the signs which Dr. James Waddell Alexander was reading too, he said: “There is a march of opinion on the subject which would, if uninterrupted, at no distant date, annihilate this evil [slavery] in Virginia. I have no doubt of it.”<sup>3</sup> Still other instructive and agreeable observations on the slave in Charlotte County appear in Dr. James Waddell Alexan-

<sup>1</sup> May 13, 1827, 40 *Yrs.* *Familiar Letters*, by Dr. Alexander, v. 1, 104.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoir of the Rev. John H. Rice*, by Wm. Maxwell, 313.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, 312.

der's *Familiar Letters*. "In all this country," he wrote from Ingleside in that county, "there is no sign or suspicion of any suffering. I have renewed my acquaintance with a large number of the old blacks, and have been struck with the ease of their life."<sup>1</sup> These words were written in 1855; but slavery in Charlotte County in that year was not materially different from what it was 25 or 30 years before. If there was any cruelty practiced upon the slave in that county, or if the slaves there harbored any animosity towards their masters, the fact was not brought to the attention of Dr. James Waddell Alexander:

"I do believe," he wrote to Dr. Hall, "that there are a dozen on this estate who would risk their lives in an instant for my wife. They are under ordinary masters a happy people. . . . Several wait on my wife who are as well bred and (in heart) refined as ladies."<sup>2</sup>

In another letter, he declared:

"I am more and more convinced of the injustice we do slaveholders. Of their feelings towards their negroes I can form a better notion than formerly by examining my own towards the slaves who wait on my wife and mind my children. It is a feeling most like that we have to near relations. Nanette is a mild but active brown woman with whom I would trust any interest we have. She is an invalid, however, and in the North, would long since have died in an almshouse. As it is, she will be well housed, well fed, protected and happy if she lives to be 100. There are two blind women, 80-90, on this estate who have done nothing for years."<sup>3</sup> Dr. Alexander also had this to tell Dr. Hall:

"Mrs. ——'s cook (*emerita*), Patty, she says, 'is as pious a woman, and a lady of as delicate sensibilities as I ever saw; she is one of the very best friends I have in the

<sup>1</sup> Apr. 20, 1855, v. 2, 208.

<sup>2</sup> Mar. 21, 1842, 40 *Yrs.* *Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 353.

<sup>3</sup> Mar. 10, 1842, *Id.*, v. 1, 351.

world.'"<sup>1</sup> Such a declaration brings home to us very pointedly the affectionate intimacy which often existed between the mistress and her servant under the patriarchal slave conditions of Southside Virginia. The careless levity with which servitude was accepted by the younger blacks, at any rate, is amusingly brought out by Dr. Alexander: "One of Mrs. LeGrand's black girls, *aet.* 14, said more than once to my wife, with a face of great importunity, 'Miss Betsy do pray ax Missum to gi' me to ye'."<sup>2</sup> In nothing was Dr. James Waddell Alexander so much interested as in the religious improvement of the blacks; and both in his *Life* of his father, the Rev. Dr. Archibald Alexander, and in his *Familiar Letters*, he imparts much valuable information on that point. The names of black communicants at Cub Creek Church in Charlotte County, he assures us in his *Life* of his father, exceeded those of the whites, and were probably more than 100<sup>3</sup>; Dr. James Waddell Alexander also speaks of a preacher named Skidmore, himself a slaveholder, who had some thirty plantations under his charge, at one of which he preached every evening to the blacks. His system was to enroll the names of his hearers and to conduct the meeting on the plan of a class meeting.<sup>4</sup> "I am much affected by the negro singing," Dr. Alexander adds. "There is a softness in their voices which penetrates me, and in these meetings they all sing down to the infants."<sup>5</sup> In another place, he speaks of the negro-singing at a meeting as being true enough in tone to have satisfied Haydn.<sup>6</sup> These remarks remind us of the profound truth that Randolph uttered when he said that the negro is musical but not poetical.<sup>7</sup>

Dr. James Waddell Alexander energetically strove both

<sup>1</sup> *Id.*, v. 1, 351.

<sup>2</sup> Oct. 19, 1838, *Id.*, v. 1, 271.

<sup>3</sup> P. 157.

<sup>4</sup> 40 Yrs.' *Familiar Letters*, by Dr. Alexander, v. 1, 351.

<sup>5</sup> Mar. 10, 1842, *Id.*, v. 1, 351.

<sup>6</sup> Mar. 25, 1842, *Id.*, v. 1, 355.

<sup>7</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.



by preaching and conversational exhortation to inspire the slaves about him with a proper sense of religious responsibility; and he appears to have taken a very favorable view of their capacity for religious instruction. Some of the negroes about Ingleside seemed to him to be as good and experienced Christians as any white people of the laboring class.<sup>1</sup> He even tells us that many of the negroes around Charlotte Court House seemed to him to be genuine saints.<sup>2</sup> That they were, however, we must say frankly, we do not believe; if for no other reason because we have never met with any white persons of that description. Dr. James Waddell Alexander undoubtedly saw slavery at its best in the refined and Christian community with which he was connected, first, as a pastor, and then as a visitor; and his Northern prejudices against it were doubtless to some degree qualified by his Virginian descent and Virginian wife, though he was but a mere child when his father left Virginia, and he did not marry Elizabeth C. Cabell, the daughter of Dr. Geo. Cabell, until he had expressed the same ideas about the Virginia slave that he expressed after marriage; but that the testimony of so able and upright a man in regard to the real conditions of the ante-bellum negro in Southside Virginia is entitled to an uncommon degree of respect is too manifest to require emphasis.

But it would be grave error to imagine that the whites in Randolph's District did not differ materially from the whites in Tidewater Virginia. What has been loosely called the cavalier element in Virginia was well represented in such families as the Randolphs, the Pages, and the Harrisons, of Cumberland County, and the Carringtons, of Cumberland and Charlotte Counties; but, in Cumberland County, which included, until 1761, the territory, now known as Buckingham County, and in Prince Ed-

<sup>1</sup> Apr. 20, 1855, *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, v. 2, 208.

<sup>2</sup> Oct. 19, 1838, *Id.*, v. 1, 271.

ward and Charlotte Counties there was, after the middle of the 18th century, a large Presbyterian element which gave a character of its own to the population of those counties. Many years before the Revolution, they were frequently visited by the great Presbyterian missionary and preacher, Samuel Davies, of Delaware, who became generally known as the Apostle of Virginia; and, about 1735, under the leadership of John Caldwell, the grandfather of John C. Calhoun, Presbyterian settlements were effected on Cub Creek, in Charlotte County, on Buffalo Creek, in Prince Edward County, and at Hat Creek and Concord, in Campbell County. Later, the Cub Creek Church, another Presbyterian Church, at Briery, in Prince Edward County, and Hampden-Sidney Academy, afterwards Hampden-Sidney College, established in Prince Edward County in 1775 by the Presbytery of Hanover, became leading centers of Presbyterian influence in the United States. Among the remarkable men, who were at one time or other Presidents of Hampden-Sidney, in its early history, were Samuel Stanhope Smith, its first president, a graduate of Princeton, who afterwards became President of that institution; John Blair Smith, the brother of Samuel Stanhope Smith and likewise a graduate of Princeton, who afterwards became President of Union College, New York; Dr. Archibald Alexander, who afterwards became the first professor of Theology in the Princeton Theological Seminary, and Dr. Moses Hoge, whose eloquence was greatly admired by John Randolph.

(a) Among its professors, when Dr. Archibald Alexander was its President, was Dr. John Holt Rice, a "truly great and extraordinary man" in the opinion of Dr. Archibald Alexander,<sup>1</sup> who was later offered the Presidency of Princeton but declined it, and Dr. Conrad Speece, who had "a great mind," in the opinion of Wm. Wirt.<sup>2</sup> Dur-

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Rev. John Holt Rice*, by Maxwell, 399.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 202.

ing the Presidency of Dr. Hoge, were laid the foundations of the Union Theological Seminary, which, until its removal, a few years ago, from Prince Edward County to Richmond, was associated for so many years in the public mind with Hampden-Sidney College. Under the headship of Dr. Rice, this institution acquired as high a reputation in the South as the Theological Seminary of Princeton enjoyed in the North, and it would be difficult to exaggerate the extent to which the able and devoted men, who have been connected with it and Hampden-Sidney College have moulded the minds and characters of the people of Southside Virginia. The effect of the Calvinistic ministers, who taught at the two institutions, and of the different ministers, who filled the Presbyterian pulpits of Cumberland, Prince Edward, and Charlotte Counties after 1735, was to give to life in those counties a soberer and more earnest aspect than life usually wore among the more social and pleasure-loving inhabitants of Tidewater Virginia. Every few miles, along the woodland roads in Randolph's District, stood some large, bare, quadrangular frame structure, with no more pretensions to architectural beauty or grace than a drygoods box, where Sunday after Sunday some dutiful Presbyterian divine expounded the stern dogmas of his creed, inculcated the purest and soundest principles of morality, confirmed the faith of the careless and wavering, and held up to the eyes of the penitent sinner the atoning blood of Christ Jesus. All of these faithful men were not Archibald Alexanders, or John Holt Rices, or Moses Hoges; certainly not such a sublime melting orator as the blind Presbyterian preacher, James Waddell, the father-in-law of Dr. Archibald Alexander, whose eloquence William Wirt has sketched in *The British Spy* with such a telling pencil. Men like these are rare at any time and anywhere; but far the greater portion of them were worthy of the Scotch Calvinism which, in the person of its minister,

experienced no difficulty in reconciling the narrowest income, the barest surroundings, and the plainest fare with dignity of character and bearing, a lofty standard of morals and deportment, profound learning, and the persuasive accents which captivate unwilling hearts. If the author were to take his reader to the humble edifice on Cub Creek, where the crook of John Caldwell brought together one of the first Presbyterian flocks in Southside Virginia, he could scarcely believe that, in such a building, in such a half-subdued wilderness, could such famous men as Dr. Archibald Alexander and Dr. John Holt Rice have ever pursued their sacred calling, and the incredulity of the reader would be hardly less outspoken were the author to take him a few miles west of Cub Creek Church to Roanoke Church, another great four-square barn of later date and tell him that here at times in his boyhood, when the Roanoke Presbytery was holding its sessions, and every hospitable home in the vicinity was honored by having some clergyman billeted upon it, would be seen more than one debater or orator such as Robert L. Dabney, or Clement C. Vaughn, qualified to arrest and fix the attention of any assemblage, however critical.

Almost from the beginning of its existence as a civilized community, therefore, Randolph's District was Presbyterian territory, and, under the influence, modified by slavery, of course, as everything else within its limits was, of the peculiar tenets and temperament of Presbyterianism. In Randolph's time, there was no Episcopal rector in Charlotte County,<sup>1</sup> and there was no Methodist Church there until 1842<sup>2</sup>; and, as there were no, or practically, no Catholics, the only sects, except the Methodists, who had some little strength here and there, to whom the spiritual welfare of the people in Randolph's District was

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 38.

<sup>2</sup> Feb. 23, 1842, *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, by Dr. Archibald Alexander, v. 1, 349.

committed, were the Presbyterians and the Baptists; and the influence of the latter, though considerable, was not determining. On the whole, the churches of these sects discharged their trusts with fidelity and efficiency, and were not only religious agencies but points about which no small part of the social life of their members circled. Indeed, Charles Bruce, the Charlotte County planter, to whom we have several times referred, bearing in mind the market reports and countryside gossip, of which they were no mean centers of propagation, was once heard to say that their communicants deserved no credit for attending their services with such punctilious regularity because they supplied these communicants with almost their only sources of social recreation and business intelligence. Be this as it may, the types of character, developed by them, were often very different from those developed by the Established Church, or even the Episcopal Church, as afterwards more or less evangelized. At times, great waves of religious enthusiasm, known as revivals, would sweep over them, blowing up the dying embers and bleaching ashes of sinking religious faith into quickened life, rekindling the love and fear, to which religion beyond any other human agency holds the keys, and filling the breasts of the indifferent, the selfish, and the depraved with tumultuous feelings of mingled self-reproach and hope which sometimes found expression even in hysteria. And, at one time, there was an intestine controversy between the Old School and New School Presbyterians in Southside Virginia sufficiently bitter to cause Dr. James Waddell Alexander to speak of it as "The Holy War." In fact, he even said that it was "*bellum plusquam civile*," and divided house against house and mother against daughter.<sup>1</sup>

To realize how unlike, in some respects, the tone of society in Southside Virginia in Randolph's day was from

<sup>1</sup>Oct. 13, 1838, 40 Yrs.' *Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 269.

that of the state of society, of which the Established Episcopal Church in Tidewater Virginia was one of the principal features, we need only turn to some of the particularly conspicuous individuals, men and women, who were the fruits of Presbyterianism in the former region. One of the most conspicuous, Little Joe Morton, became an inhabitant of Charlotte County, then a part of Lunenburg County, so early that when he built his log cabin near Little Roanoke Bridge, he did not have a neighbor nearer than 30 miles to protect his wife and children, when he was called away from home by his business as a surveyor. It was he who was employed at times by the Randolphs and others to look up lands in the country about his rude abode for which it might be desirable for them to secure patents. He is said to have been a bold pioneer, a staunch hunter, and a skilful tracker and rounder-up of wild horses, like those which gave Horse Pen Creek in Charlotte County its name.<sup>1</sup> The manner, in which this man became enlisted in the service of God, is thus narrated in a brief memoir of him which appeared in the *Watchman and Observer* for Feb. 18, 1847.

“When Mr. Davies took long tours of preaching, which he usually did in the course of the year, he was commonly accompanied by a pious young man not merely as a companion but as a pioneer, to ride on before and find a place of lodging; for many people were unwilling to receive a ‘New Light’ preacher into their houses in those days. In this service, young John Morton (father of Major Morton) was sometimes employed, for, having been converted under Mr. Davies’ ministry, he was delighted to have the opportunity of enjoying his company and pious conversation. The writer has often heard old Mrs. Morton, of Little Roanoke Bridge, called ‘the Mother in Israel,’ relate the circumstance of Mr. Davies’ first visit to that place. Young John Morton, who was a relative, came one day to know whether Mr. Davies, the ‘New Light’ preacher, could be lodged there that night. Her hus-

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Dr. Archibald Alexander*, by Dr. James Waddell Alexander, 180.

band, called by way of distinction Little Joe Morton, not being at the house, she could not answer. But when he was sent for from the field, and the question was proposed to him, after a few moments' consideration, he answered in the affirmative; and Mr. Morton went back to the inn and brought Mr. Davies to the house; and with him Christ and salvation came to that house. Both of the heads of the family, under the influence of the gospel, as heard from Mr. Davies, became truly and eminently pious; and their conversion was the foundation of the Briery Congregation, of which Little Joe Morton was the first elder, and, before they had a regular minister, was more like a pastor than a ruling elder; for every Sabbath he would convene the people and read to them an evangelical sermon, and regularly catechise the children out of the shorter catechism. The writer never saw this excellent man, but he can truly say he never knew any layman to leave behind him a sweeter savor of piety. None was ever heard to speak of him, after his decease, otherwise than with respect, bordering on veneration; and all the children of this pious pair became members of the Presbyterian Church; and, if all their children and grandchildren were collected together, who are members of the church, they would form a large congregation; and, among them, would be found several preachers of the Gospel."<sup>1</sup>

Another prominent figure, in the early history of Southside Virginia Presbyterianism, was Col. Samuel Venable, who was a graduate of Princeton, as were his three brothers, Abraham, Richard, and Nathaniel, and many another braw young Southside Virginian. Dr. Archibald Alexander became acquainted with him in 1789, or 9 years after he had graduated at Princeton, and, during the whole of his own life, was accustomed to speak of him as the most remarkable instance of wisdom, matured by experience and observation, that he had ever known; indeed, in this respect, he is said to have been fond of comparing him with Franklin.<sup>2</sup> He resided in Prince

<sup>1</sup> *Sketches of Va.*, by Foote, 215.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Dr. Archibald Alexander*, by Alexander, 128-130.



Edward County, and was successful enough as a merchant, to accumulate a large estate for his time. His wife was the daughter of the elder Judge Paul Carrington, and is said to have been a woman of uncommon vivacity, wit, and power of sarcasm; and they had twelve children, all of whom she lived to see married and converted.<sup>1</sup> In 1842, no less than 142 descendants of this pair were living.<sup>2</sup>

Not unlike one of those devout women, who ministered to the comfort of the Apostles, was another individual who has been portrayed for us with sharp distinctness by her grateful contemporaries; that is Paulina Read, first the wife of Edmund Read, and afterwards of the Rev. Nash LeGrand, a Presbyterian minister. It was at her home, "Retirement," about two miles from Charlotte Court House, that Dr. Archibald Alexander resided for three or four years, during his pastorate in Charlotte County; and, thirty years afterwards, the same hospitable and Christian roof sheltered Dr. James Waddell Alexander, during his pastorate in the same county. Her plantation was contiguous with Ingleside, the plantation of Henry Carrington, which Dr. James Waddell Alexander occasionally visited after his pastorate in Charlotte County had ceased, and the two together contained about 6,000 acres of land, which seem to have been kept in a well-tilled and highly productive condition.<sup>3</sup> In his *Life of Dr. Archibald Alexander*, Dr. James Waddell Alexander tells us that Mrs. LeGrand was widely known among Christians of every name in Virginia, and that probably no house in the land ever opened its doors to more ministers of the Gospel; that, indeed, a whole Presbytery was sometimes sheltered under her roof; and that her wealth was largely dispensed in acts of charity. He further tells us that though of a despondent turn as to her own spiritual

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Dr. Archibald Alexander*, by Alexander, 129; and *Forty Years' Familiar Letters*, by Alexander, v. 1, 352.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *40 Yrs. Familiar Letters*, by Alexander, v. 1, 269.



state, she was perpetually occupied with religious thoughts and employment, and was a devoted hearer of the Word; and that, when Dr. Archibald Alexander first came to Charlotte County, having been recently brought to the knowledge of the evangelical truth, she was full of zeal, and unwearied in her endeavors to second all Gospel labors.<sup>1</sup> And how constant were the principles by which her conduct was governed may be inferred from what Dr. James Waddell Alexander had to say of her long afterwards in his *Forty Years' Familiar Letters*, when he was on a visit to Charlotte County, after his return to Princeton:

“Mrs. LeGrand’s house is still full from day to day. There is not a small mechanic or laboring family in all the village, or vicinage, who does not freely come to her for aid, or as freely enter her doors. I sincerely think I have never seen a human being who lived so much for others. Mere sacrifice of money is little: in her case it is sacrifice of health, time, privacy, convenience, ease, and (virtually) of life. She is about 78, and is ill enough any day to keep her bed, which she never kept except when in severe pain or extreme languor. Her cough is deadly and her extenuation extreme.”<sup>2</sup>

Later, when the news of Mrs. LeGrand’s death reached him, Dr. James Waddell Alexander used these tender words about her; not so tender, however, as to lose sight of the tenebrous shadows in which their object had worked out her salvation under the stern creed of Calvin:

“I suppose I had no better friend on earth. Mrs. LeGrand has been an extraordinary woman. Her views of her own religious state were always dark. On every other point, no one could be less morbid or more clear of sight. Her conscience and intrepidity exceeded all I ever read in books. I do not believe the human being lived to whom she durst not speak her mind. Her beneficence for 60 years has

<sup>1</sup> *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, by Dr. Alexander, v. 2, 19–21.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, v. 1, 349.

been, so far as I know, unexampled. Like most planters, she had little ready money; but she has been a perennial fountain of good works. She has washed the saints' feet; her notions of plainness were extreme; her personal attire was little above that of her servants in expense; she loved all of every sect who loved religion; and such as did not she exhorted and warned in a way which shames me when I write. She was distressingly exercised about slavery, but what could she do? She often asked me, but I was dumb. She had as many as possible taught to read and this up to the present time (1845). A large number of her slaves are real Christians; not to speak of perhaps a hundred who have gone to Heaven. I fully believe that more of them have secured eternal life than would have been the case in any freedom conceivable."<sup>1</sup>

Seven days later, in another letter to Dr. Hall, Dr. James Waddell Alexander said:

"My father lived under her roof several years; so did I 30 years after. My first interview with my wife was there. There also was my first ministry. A longer course of good doing (εὐποιῖα, Heb. xiii), I never knew. The executive part of Christianity seemed almost perfect in her."<sup>2</sup>

In an earlier letter, Dr. James Waddell Alexander tells us that Mrs. LeGrand lodged and boarded "a good Episcopalian (a Connecticut man but 20 years in Virginia) awaiting orders for his business among her slaves." "He has this moment," he adds, "returned on foot, and through a smart rain, from the overseer's house, two miles off, where he instructed a group of 15 last night."<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, Southside Virginia Presbyterianism seems to have even had its ascetic, a fact, happily, that has not often clouded the spirit of the healthy-minded people of that portion of Virginia. Referring in one of his letters to Dr. Hall to a recent visit to Prince Edward County, Dr. James Waddell Alexander says:

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 10, 1845, *Id.*, v. 2, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Feb. 17, 1845, *Id.*, v. 2, 21.

<sup>3</sup> Oct. 19, 1838, *Id.*, v. 1, 272.

"I there saw such an instance of solitary life as I never before witnessed. Mrs. Spencer, a woman of nearly 80 years of age, has lived the life of a hermit for about 30 years. Her residence is a little log hut at a distance from any other habitation, and she suffers no living being to remain with her during the night, or for any long period during the day. Her victuals are cooked about half a mile off and sent to her once a day. She is crooked and withered; dresses always in white linen, and in the oldest fashion. Her whole time is spent in reading the Scriptures, singing and prayer. Visitors sometimes have to remain nearly an hour at her door before she concludes the prayer in which she may be engaged. She is the most unearthly being I ever beheld; her conversation is pleasant and rational; and her religion seems to be unfeigned and ardent."<sup>1</sup>

In his *John Randolph*, Henry Adams expresses the opinion that one of the reasons why Randolph's constituents were so patient with him was because "they were used to coarseness that would have sickened a Connecticut peddler."<sup>2</sup> Just how much coarseness it takes to sicken a Connecticut, or any other, peddler, we confess ourselves unable to decide. Not a little, we imagine, whether peddlers engaged in peddling wooden nutmegs or other wares. But, if what Adams meant to say was that the society, of which Randolph was a part, was a peculiarly coarse one, he simply did not state a fact. Social conditions in Southside Virginia, during Randolph's time, had, of course, their shortcomings. Judged by latter day standards, they were marked by a certain degree of rawness and rustic simplicity such as one would naturally expect in communities which had but recently been frontier settlements and had not fully taken on the character of a complex and long-established civilization.

"I am under great uneasiness for Tudor," Randolph wrote on one occasion to Josiah Quincy from Richmond. "There

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 13, 1827, *Id.*, v. 1, 99.

<sup>2</sup> P. 256.

is no field for him in his native country. Would you have him return here, attend a court every week, ride more miles than a post-boy, sleep *two* perhaps *three* in a bed and barely make a support for himself and his horse? Such is the life of our country lawyers who eke out their scanty gains by some paltry speculation at the Sheriff's sales."<sup>1</sup> (a)

The gentry class had the defects of the virtues, as well as the virtues, which inhere in an aristocratic, or quasi-aristocratic, society. The pride of this class was too quick to take alarm at supposed insult or indignity, and manifested itself at times, even when there was no such fancied provocative, in a too imperious and overbearing spirit. Jefferson was right when he said that the effect of slavery was to foster a despotic spirit in the breast of the whites, though the coloring that he gave to his statement was perhaps too vivid. The courtesy of this class was sometimes a little Grandisonian, and its courage ran out too quickly into temerity. Its deference for women occasionally made it difficult for a man to obtain justice where a woman was his accuser. In many economic respects, too, the ignorance and inefficiency of the slave, and, above all, the extent to which his numbers and servility relieved the members of this class of the necessity of doing many things for themselves that it is well for every human being to be under the necessity of doing for himself, reacted unfavorably, to some extent, upon their *morale*; though there was never a better school than the Southern plantation for the development of leadership and the executive faculty. The thriftless, shiftless mass of human beings, with whom they had to deal, apart from its direct influence over them in one way or another, could not but finally make them more or less indifferent to proper industrial standards of every kind.

Nor should any false sense of delicacy deter us from admitting that the purity of conduct which was so con-

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 351.

spicuous among women of the gentry class, and, through force of example, of the lower classes of whites as well, in Southside Virginia, under the Slave Régime, was due in some measure to the abundant opportunity that the women of a servile and degraded race afforded the white race for licentious intercourse. In the matter of sexual purity, the white women of the South, under the Slave Régime, unmarried and married, reached perhaps as high a level of attainment as can ever be expected under any social conditions, and, because of the influence naturally exerted by the character of such women over their husbands, as well as other conspiring influences, it is surprising how rarely it was, though illustrations to the contrary might be readily cited, that the Ishmaelitish Hagar came between Sarah and her lord. (*a*) But, in the opinion of the author, it cannot be truthfully declared that any higher standard of sexual morality prevailed among young unmarried white men under the Slave Régime in Southside Virginia than among young unmarried men in other portions of the United States; though he is yet to have any convincing evidence brought to his attention showing that the standard which prevailed among them was lower.

The manners of the less fortunate whites were in some respects, of course, rude. In his *John Randolph*, Henry Adams speaks of gouging as if it prevailed in Randolph's youth in every country neighborhood in Virginia, whether in the backwoods or otherwise. To begin with, the extent of this frontier practice is grossly exaggerated by him. But it was not until he published his history of the United States that he brought out the fact, which he might have been just and candid enough to have brought out in his *John Randolph*, that, during the time that the practice of gouging prevailed in Virginia, it also prevailed in England.<sup>1</sup> Even Anburey, who formed an unfavorable opinion in some regards of the lower orders of the white

<sup>1</sup> V. I, 52.

population of Virginia, in 1789, states that the better class of the two classes into which he divides them were hospitable, generous, and friendly. In the judgment of the author, no people with the same limited opportunities were ever more liberally endowed with the rudimentary virtues of true manhood than both classes. The Civil War, if nothing else, demonstrated that. Backward in many respects as they were, the humblest of them had a natural dignity and independence of character, and a fund of innate sympathy and good feeling, which, if they did not distinguish him from the whites of the same stock and class in other portions of the United States, distinguished him very sharply indeed from individuals of the same class in many foreign lands.

Fortunately for Southside Virginia Dr. James Waddell Alexander and Dr. Archibald Alexander have both borne testimony to what the people of Randolph's District were under social conditions which placed within the reach of a small pecuniary income a measure of material abundance and comfort that even a considerable fortune now often fails to secure, made good manners, moral worth, and intellectual distinction, rather than the mere acquisition of wealth, the passports to public respect and favor, and left some time from the practical duties of life, now too often devoted to the feverish pursuit of unwholesome pleasures or excessive gain, for the cultivation of social gifts, and the indulgence of the mellow and more cordial impulses of the human heart.

The first view that the former Alexander had of Southside Virginia was in Petersburg when he was on his way to his new home at Charlotte Court House. After speaking in a letter to Dr. Hall of the incessant round of social exactions which he had been treading, "enlivened by the peculiarly abundant good cheer of this bountiful land and the copious flowing of rum toddy and the like refectations," and of rides on a "high-blooded horse," in

company with fellow equestrians and a carriage load of beauty and vivacity, and of corn bread and bacon, oysters and hominy, daily dinners and unceasing conversation, he uses these words:

“As to society, I am free to declare that I have never so enjoyed social and Christian intercourse in my life as here. Without trying it, you can have no conception of what Southern hospitality means. After all my preparations and previous knowledge, I find myself daily surprised with the winning cordiality and kindness of the people; and this not merely in expression and words. Every house seems at once a home, and every individual devotes himself heartily, and, with manifest satisfaction, to your service. If you look for splendor, you would be disappointed, except in the particulars of servants’ attendance and diet. The tables of the Seaboard Virginians are worthy of their fame. I am sometimes almost disconcerted with the multitude of servants waiting at table.”<sup>1</sup>

And then, as now, the Virginian had his way of harmonizing his social recreations with his religious duties. “There are in my uncle’s [Dr. Benjamin H. Rice] congregation about 25 young men who profess religion, and are more active in the cause than many ministers,” Dr. Alexander says in the same letter. “From this you may judge what the people in general are.” In the same letter, the writer also says that “the number of agreeable and pious ladies is remarkable,” and the easy access to everybody’s house and heart more free than he had ever expected in his fondest hopes. “A man who comes here,” he adds just a little reflectively, “must come with some equestrian skill or expect to get his neck broken.”<sup>2</sup>

On his return to “Retirement” after a considerable sojourn at the North, for his health, and when he had resolved to give up his charge in Charlotte County, Dr. Alex-

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 23, 1825, *40 Yrs.’ Familiar Letters*, by Alexander, v. 1, 91.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 92.



ander wrote to Dr. Hall: "I expect never to see so many persons so rejoiced to meet with me as appeared at the little church last Sunday. It is painful, indeed, to leave friends so cordial and sincere, but I believe I am pursuing the path of duty."<sup>1</sup> When he settled down in Trenton, he wrote to Dr. Hall that, under the new circumstances, he felt a greater stimulus to what might be called the external or literary part of preparation than he had ever experienced among his simpler flock in Virginia;<sup>2</sup> but, in a later letter, he observed feelingly to the same correspondent that he had once had experience with the wretchedness of leaving an affectionate people and that the experiment was one of which he craved no repetition.<sup>3</sup> Some 19 months afterwards, he wrote to Dr. Hall that he should be unwilling to exchange Trenton for any pastoral charge that he had ever seen, excepting only Charlotte Court House, Va., which it would be sheer madness for him to undertake with his atrabilious temperament.<sup>4</sup> The general character of the whole country, which Dr. Archibald Alexander made the seat of his labors, when he assumed charge of Cub Creek and Briery Churches, is very accurately stated in the biography of him written by Dr. James Waddell Alexander:

"There is no portion of the State or country where the bright side of the planters' life is more agreeably exhibited. The district has always been remarkable for its adaptation to the culture of a particular variety of tobacco which usually commands high prices, and it has, therefore, abounded in slaves. Although the estates are less extensive than in the cotton districts of the remoter South, the proprietors enjoy the comforts and luxuries of life in a high degree, and almost every family has some man of liberal education within its bosom. Hospitality and genial warmth may be said to be

<sup>1</sup> Nov. 16, 1828, *Id.*, 115.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 24, 1829, *Id.*, v. 1, 120.

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 4, 1829, *Id.*, v. 1, 138.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, v. 1, 172.



universal. Nowhere in the South has the Presbyterian Church had greater strength among the wealthy and cultivated classes. It was to be for a long time the theatre of Mr. Alexander's labors; and throughout life he looked back on these as halcyon days."<sup>1</sup>

There could be no doubt about the "hospitality and genial warmth." On Oct. 19, 1838, writing to Dr. Hall from Charlotte Court House, where he was paying a visit, Dr. Alexander said:

"The manners and customs here are not the best for an invalid. A visit of relations, some 20 in number, horses, coaches, retinue, etc., lasts at least one day; sometimes a week. Where one comes 17 miles, as —— did to see us, it is out of the question to make a morning call. And, when in turn we go to see some of our kin, the solemnities of an old time ceremonious dinner are anything but reviving to a queasy stomach."<sup>2</sup>

And it would be a mistake to suppose that the upper classes in this community at any rate lacked schools; for on Feb. 23, 1842, Dr. Alexander wrote to Dr. Hall from Charlotte Court House: "There are five schools in this village; among these is Michael Osborne's lately erected girls' school which has 26 already."<sup>3</sup> In 1836, *Martin's Gazetteer* makes mention also of a female academy and two elementary schools for boys at Marysville, the County seat of Buckingham County; of another elementary school at Cartersville in Cumberland County; of a female school at Farmville in Prince Edward County, and of a male academy and seminary at Prince Edward Court House in Prince Edward County. The latter enjoyed a high reputation, provided for a three-year course, had about 80 pupils, and was conducted by two principals and five assistants. The former prepared youths for college.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Dr. Archibald Alexander*, by Alexander, 156.

<sup>2</sup> *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, by Alexander, v. 1, 271.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, 349.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 135, 161, 268, 269.

Besides the educational facilities afforded by these schools, there were, of course, throughout Randolph's District, those afforded by the ruder schools, known as the "Old-field Schools."

After preaching in 1789 in Charlotte and Prince Edward Counties, Dr. Archibald Alexander referred to the people in whose midst he had been as those "affectionate and delightful people."<sup>1</sup> At times, when on one of his pastoral rounds, the rites of hospitality would be pressed upon him with such assiduous solicitude by his plainer parishioners that he would find himself tied down for hours to a single spot. Thus, on one occasion at old Mr. Redd's, on Bush River, no heed whatever was paid to his assurance that he did not come to dine, and everything was set in motion to spread "an enormous dinner" before him; chickens were chased in all directions, fires were kindled, the closets were searched, and, in addition to the chickens, the mistress and her maids were soon in the act of preparing a fat turkey for the spit. Finally, when old Mr. Redd came in, he would not permit himself to be seen until he had shaved his beard and put on some clean clothes. On this occasion, Dr. Archibald Alexander found that he had wasted a whole day in visiting one family. So for this method of pastoral visitation he adopted that of preaching in different parts of his clerical pale in private houses; but this, too, he found would not do; for so kind and hospitable were the instincts of the householder that, with his invitation, sometimes as many as 30 persons remained after the service to dine. "The old Virginians," Dr. Alexander comments, "never count the cost of dinners even when they give very little for the support of the gospel."<sup>2</sup>

Such social characteristics as these may be vulnerable from an economic point of view, and cannot be reconciled with fastidious standards of elegance, but they certainly

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Dr. Archibald Alexander*, by Alexander, 128.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 169-171.

do not betoken the kind of coarseness that is likely to sicken anybody—Connecticut peddler or otherwise—unless it be some such person as the devitalized American who, wearied with the “sad satiety” of a life without duties, and largely spent abroad in the pursuit of purely artificial gratifications, sinks, with a withered cry, from a jaded life into a rayless grave.

And it would be a misconception also to think of the homes of the landed gentry in Southside Virginia in Randolph's time as wholly hard and devoid of adornment. The furniture at Prestwould was handsome enough to excite the admiration of Lancaster when he was making his circuit of the old Virginia mansion-houses.<sup>1</sup> And no little attention seems to have been given to flowers by the inmates of some of these homes. In one of his letters to Dr. Hall, Dr. James Waddell Alexander speaks with enthusiasm of “the ten million blossomings” of “the wide plantation,” on which he then was, that were out together—“peach, apricot, cherry, plum, crab and apple,” intermixed with the lilac, the almond, the pyrus japonica, corcoras and hyacinths.<sup>2</sup> In another letter, he says: “I have just been in Mrs. LeGrand's garden; which is faeryland. There are blooming and perfuming at this moment, and by wholesale, yellow jasmines, double peach hyacinths, Siberian crab, tulip, violets, pansies, jonquils, etc.”<sup>3</sup> And this is the description that he gives of another garden near Prestwould:

“In Abram Venable's garden of 3 acres, I counted 66 beds of tulips in bloom, and, in an average bed, I counted 144 tulips—9504 actually blooming; every shade and contour. He is equally curious in roses. His house is in full view of Prestwould, seat of the late Sir Peyton Skipwith, occupied by Humberston Skipwith, the 2d son. Sir Grey lives abroad.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Historic Va. Homes and Churches*, 445.

<sup>2</sup> Apr. 20, 1855, *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, by Alexander, v. 2, 207.

<sup>3</sup> Mar. 25, 1842.

<sup>4</sup> Apr. 26, 1842, *Id.*, v. 1, 356.

All this after telling us that, while in Mecklenburg County, he saw eglantine and coral honeysuckle wild and as "plenty as blackberries," and found the air of its swamps oppressively loaded with the fragrance of the calycanthus. But may not a native of Southside Virginia ask whether the good doctor was not mistaken in supposing that he inhaled the fragrance of the calycanthus outside of Mrs. LeGrand's garden? Even after the Civil War, the flower gardens at Ridgeway, the home of one of the younger Paul Carringtons, Staunton Hill, the home of Charles Bruce, and Windstone, the home of Edward Winston Henry, one of the sons of Patrick Henry, all in Charlotte County, still existed to give an idea of what the gardens of Mrs. LeGrand and Abram Venable were.

And it was a manly race, too, with which the Alexanders—father and son—came into contact!

"The boys are centaurs," Dr. James Waddell Alexander wrote to Dr. Hall, "and I wonder daily at the coolness with which Mrs. C., a very cautious mother, sees her son, 9 years old, galloping like the wind through woods, and over fences and ditches on a colt, or a mule, or anything that has legs."<sup>1</sup>

And a boy took so early to his gun in Southside Virginia that it was hard for him, after he became a man, to remember how old he was when he shot his first "partridge" on the wing, or first joined in the hue and cry of a fox-chase.

"If you love shooting," Dr. Alexander wrote to Dr. Hall on another occasion from "Retirement," "come here and, without going off this plantation, you may bag your four dozen quail a day, with an occasional wild turkey; pheasants and rabbits also abound. An acquaintance of mine has caught more than 20 foxes this winter, and is now following his hounds with great zeal."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *40 Yrs. Familiar Letters*, by Dr. Alexander, v. 1, 353.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 26, 1827, *Id.*, v. 1, 96.

Nor can there be any doubt that law and order prevailed to a remarkable extent in Randolph's District. In a letter to Key from Roanoke, dated Feb. 9, 1818, he referred to certain crimes of deep atrocity, which had been perpetrated in the last two or three years in Charlotte County, and adds: "This country seems to labor under a judgment. It has been conspicuous for the order and morality of the inhabitants, and such is the character I hope yet."<sup>1</sup> Some eight years later, Dr. John Holt Rice spoke in a letter to the Rev. Leonard Woods of the society in Prince Edward County as bearing normally the character of being the most orderly of any in the country.<sup>2</sup> About the same time, Dr. James Waddell Alexander, writing from "Retirement" to Dr. Hall, remarked: "It is, moreover, (I speak of this county) a moral country; no gambling, no dissipation or frolicking."<sup>3</sup> Many years after Randolph's death, the same favorable testimony might have been borne to the moral character of the communities which made up his District. In 1867, in his *Defence of Virginia*, the Rev. Robert L. Dabney, who had long resided in Prince Edward County, stated that, in the "orderly little county of Prince Edward," the criminal convictions of black persons had averaged only one per year before the Civil War.<sup>4</sup> And in 1907, J. Cullen Carrington, clerk of the Charlotte County Court, could say in his *Charlotte County Hand Book* of the County, with which he was so thoroughly familiar:

"With a population of 15,355, it is no uncommon occurrence that the county jail is without inmates; and, as an evidence of their thrift [the thrift of the Charlotte County people], the report of the Superintendent of the County Poor House

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 96.

<sup>2</sup> Aug. 12, 1826, *Memoir of Dr. John Holt Rice*, by Maxwell, 299.

<sup>3</sup> *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 95.

<sup>4</sup> P. 92 (note).

for year ending July 1, 1906, showed there was an average of only 11 inmates."<sup>1</sup>

If anything, now that the prohibition of intoxicating liquors has been so overwhelmingly approved by the people of Virginia, first, as a measure of State, and then of National, policy, order and morality are more strongly entrenched in the counties of Randolph's District than they were even in his day.

Nowhere in the United States will there be found a people freer from vice and dissipation, with a profounder religious faith, or with a richer endowment of those simple, manly, native virtues and kindly, cordial, social impulses, which gave to the old Virginian society its highest worth. It is not in the social or moral character of the people of Randolph's District, either in his time or ours, that any true reproach to them is to be found, but only in the economic sequels of past conditions which still exercise, to a considerable extent, a depressing effect upon their energy and enterprise. The real criticism to which that District is subject is not that it should not have been better than it was in his time, but that it should not be better in many respects today than it was then. "The most painful thing in visiting this old slave-holding country," wrote Dr. James Waddell Alexander to Dr. Hall in 1840, "is to see, after 15 years' acquaintance, none of those municipal and domestic improvements which strike one in the North."<sup>2</sup> With our Northern brothers still setting the example that they did when these words were written, and with the rise of great industrial communities south of Virginia, and the marked material progress, which has been made in recent years by some portions of Virginia, there is good reason to hope that the counties, which were formerly in Randolph's District, may, in a few more years of desquamation, exhibit some of the "municipal and domestic improvements," the lack of

<sup>1</sup> P. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Oct. 27, 1840, *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 313.

which Dr. Alexander deplored, and yet not be despoiled of what remains of the characteristics of which he was such an intelligent observer and such a loving interpreter.

With a few exceptions, all the people in Randolph's District were engaged in tobacco planting, or in callings directly or indirectly ancillary to it. There were four or five lawyers grouped about each of its four county seats, who led the kind of life that Randolph was so loth that Tudor should lead. Here and there, was a doctor who usually united the character of a physician with that of a tobacco planter; and his life on the professional side was not only a long struggle with disease but also with bad roads and the caprices of a climate which Dr. James Waddell Alexander found one summer "tropical-canicular,"<sup>1</sup> and which, while usually blander in mid-winter than more Northern climates, yet had its share too of ice, sleet, and snow. (a) A Southside Virginia doctor, of the best standing, has been revived for us in a feeling way by Dr. George W. Bagby in his reminiscences of Dr. James Dillon, of Prince Edward County.<sup>2</sup> At every village and along the country roads, were to be seen the simple dwellings of Presbyterian and Baptist ministers, who were generally men of pious, worthy lives, and held in the highest esteem, and often in the deepest affection, by their parishioners; and, in portions of Randolph's District, there were a few Methodist Ministers also. Not many, we imagine; for it is said that when Randolph was asked to allow the use of his name as a part of the proposed name of Randolph-Macon College, and was told that the object of the college was the education of young Methodists, he replied in his sarcastic way, "Yes, you can use my name; for, when educated, they will cease to be Methodists"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> July 3, 1827, *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 107.

<sup>2</sup> *Miscellaneous Writings of Dr. George W. Bagby*, v. 1, 262.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from H. F. Hutcheson, of Mecklenburg Co., Va., to the author, Mar. 19, 1919.



—a fling which has but little point in our day when the Methodist Church abounds in learned men, who, aside from their general professional usefulness, do more, perhaps, than the clergymen of any other denomination to promote all those moral reforms which are closely associated with political progress.

There were no towns in Randolph's District; unless Farmville, in Prince Edward County, which was not incorporated until 1832, and in 1836 contained only 800 inhabitants, could be called such.<sup>1</sup> Even in regard to it, Isaac Carrington, a local wag, is said to have declared, upon visiting it not long after Randolph's death, that he had seen a good deal of the *farm* but very little of the *ville*. The only other collections of human beings deserving of mention were: Maysville, or Buckingham Court House, in Buckingham County, with a population of 300 people; Diuguidsville, in the same county, with a population of 132 people; New Canton, in the same county, with a population of 50 people; Stonewall Mills, in the same county, with a population of 20 people; Cartersville, in Cumberland County, with a population of 300 people; Ça Ira, in the same county, with a population of 210 people, hardly enough to justify the expectation of progress in which its name was born; Cumberland Court House, in the same county, with a population of 90 people; Stoney Point Mills, in the same county, with a population of 90 people; Prince Edward Court House, in Prince Edward County, with a population of some 105 people; Marysville, or Charlotte Court House, the county seat of Charlotte County, with a population of 475 people, and Keysville, in the same county, with a population of 70 people.

At these points, there was some little mercantile and industrial activity in Randolph's time; perhaps, on the whole, more than there is today, because of the extent to which the transportation facilities connecting them with

<sup>1</sup> *Martin's Gazetteer*, 268.



larger *foci* of population and business have been since improved upon, as well as because of the extent to which the concentration of capital, highly organized machinery, and the adoption of new inventions and labor-saving processes in these latter places have superseded small local stores and plants and individual handicraftsmen. At Maysville, there were four mercantile stores, an apothecary shop, three taverns, a tanner, two saddlers, two boot and shoe manufacturers, a silversmith and watchmaker, a milliner and mantua-maker, two wagon makers, two cabinet makers, three tailors, one tinplate worker, and one miller; at Diuguidsville, three general stores, two groceries, a tavern, a tobacco warehouse, a tanner, a saddler, a wheelwright, a blacksmith, a cabinet maker, a tailor, a bricklayer and stone mason; and, in the neighborhood of Diuguidsville, there were two extensive "manufacturing mills," and a grist and sawmill. At New Canton, there were three mercantile stores, one tavern, a flour mill, a tan yard, and a saddler. Four miles west of the village, was the Virginia Flour Mills, apparently a plant of some little importance. At Stonewall Mills, there were two mercantile stores, a "manufacturing mill," a tailor, a shoemaker and a blacksmith. In Buckingham County, taken as a whole, there were seven "manufacturing flour mills," capable of grinding from 200,000 to 250,000 bushels of wheat annually; five wool-carding establishments; eight tan yards, and 40 grist mills. Slate was found in abundance on Slate River within its limits, and there were gold mines within its limits too, just profitable enough to cheat those who worked them with what Dr. Johnson calls "the phantom of hope." At Cartersville, there were five mercantile stores, three groceries, a merchant mill, two builders of threshing machines, two tan yards, a saddler, and a number of mechanics, such as wheelwrights, plowmakers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, etc.; at Ca Ira three mercantile stores, two taverns, a tobacco warehouse, a flour mill, two tailors,

two wheelwrights, two blacksmiths, and two plowmakers; at Cumberland Court House a mercantile store, two taverns, a boot and shoe factory, a saddler, a tailor, and various mechanics; and at Stoney Point Mills two mercantile stores, a "large manufacturing mill," a wheelwright, a blacksmith, a cooper, and a tailor. At Prince Edward Court House there were, besides a number of "public and private offices," a tan yard, a coach manufactory, and various mechanics; at Sandy River Church a house of entertainment, a mercantile store, and several mechanics; and at Farmville, ten mercantile stores, two taverns, two tobacco warehouses, five tobacco factories which employed 250 hands, a printing office, a boot and shoe factory, a tan yard, two carpenters, a cabinet maker, two blacksmith shops, a tailor, a wheelwright, a saddler, and two milliners and mantua-makers. At Marysville there were five mercantile stores, two well-kept taverns, three boot and shoe factories, four wagon-makers' shops, each of which employed eight or ten hands, a carriage maker, two tailor shops, each of which employed a number of hands, a tanner, three saddlers, three blacksmiths, a cabinet maker, and several house carpenters and bricklayers; and at Keysville a mercantile store, a tavern, a boot and shoe factory, two wagon makers, employing many hands, a wool-carding machine on an extensive scale, a cotton gin, and two blacksmiths.

These different places afforded a considerable vent for the agricultural products of the surrounding country. At Diuguidsville, 800 to 1200 hogsheads of tobacco were annually received; at Ça Ira, 300 to 500 hogsheads, and at Farmville, 4,000 to 4,500. At Diuguidsville, 20,000 to 30,000 bushels of wheat were annually purchased. Altogether, the flour mills of Buckingham County ground from 250,000 to 350,000 bushels of wheat annually. The mill at Cartersville ground from 20,000 to 30,000 bushels annually. and the mill at Ça Ira 28,000 to 30,000 bushels.

The mills at these places were doubtless the larger mills in Cumberland County.

All of these figures in relation to population and industrial conditions are taken from *Martin's Gazetteer*, which was published in 1836,<sup>1</sup> three years after Randolph's death, and fully deserves the encomium of Prof. A. J. Morrison, of Hampden-Sidney College, who, in his invaluable monograph entitled *The Beginnings of Public Education in Virginia, 1776-1860*, justly terms it a book of "extraordinary value."<sup>2</sup>

Farmville, the *Gazetteer* pronounced, "one of the finest towns in proportion to its size and commerce in Virginia."<sup>3</sup>

In addition to the little industrial centres, mentioned by us, there were, of course, the blacksmith and wheelwright shops which have always been found everywhere in Virginia hard by the cross-roads "store"; and, on the largest plantations, the landowner usually had his own corps of negro artisans. Nor should it be forgotten that, until the Civil War, the loom and the spinning wheel were common objects in the dwelling-houses of the Southside Virginia people. From this summary, the reader can easily infer how little there was in the economic conditions of Randolph's District to recommend a high protective tariff to the favor of its people.

It was to the tobacco plant that the attention of Randolph's constituents was mainly given. Many thousands of barrels of corn were grown on the alluvial meadows of the James, the Appomattox and the Staunton Rivers and the other rivers, rivulets, creeks, and small water-courses, with which Randolph's District was seamed; and some hay was grown on these streams too. But the fierce and prolonged heat of Southside Virginia, the thinness of much of the uplands in that region, the dearth of lime in many of its fields, its sparse population, its vast expanse of virgin

<sup>1</sup> *Martin's Gazetteer*, 134, 135, 150, 151, 160, 161, 268, 269.

<sup>2</sup> P. 101.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, 268.

areas, and the lax industrial methods, born of its slave labor, all conspired to discourage the intensive system of cultivation by which its soil could have been readily made to produce much larger crops of corn and of certain kinds of hay. No little wheat, oats, and red clover, however, were grown on the hills of the district, and here and there on the large plantations were to be seen good flocks and herds of grazing animals.

Mrs. LeGrand's estate ran from Charlotte Court House southwards about 3 miles, with a much narrower width. On the south and west, it was bounded by the Little Roanoke and Randolph's Bushy Forest estate.<sup>1</sup> "Most of the land," Dr. James Waddell Alexander wrote to Dr. Hall, "is covered with thick forests intersected with many roads. The most fertile portion is the flat land through which the stream above mentioned runs. The central part is in the highest state of cultivation."<sup>2</sup> In another letter to Dr. Hall, he says that the wheat fields around Charlotte Court House were often as much as 100 acres in extent, and speaks of the large herds which gave a pastoral effect to the landscape.<sup>3</sup> Of little moment, however, in the lives of the people in Randolph's District as a whole, as compared with tobacco, were cereals and livestock. The protracted summer weather gave the plant a full opportunity to mature; the boundless forests supplied an unlimited quantity of fuel with which to cure it, and, when it exhausted the fertility of one field, a fresh area, on which it could be produced in quantity, could be readily reclaimed in the form of "new grounds" from the woods. In one of his letters to Dr. Hall, Dr. Alexander mentioned the fact that \$200.00 worth of tobacco had been raised on one little island of less than two acres.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the habits formed by a thorough familiarity with tobacco

<sup>1</sup> *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 102.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Apr. 20, 1855, *Id.*, v. 2, 207.

<sup>4</sup> Oct. 13, 1838, *Id.*, v. 1, 269.

culture dated back to the earliest colonial history of Virginia. All the world has heard of "King Cotton," but "King Tobacco" was quite as despotic a potentate within his narrower domain, and, in one form or another, the Southside Virginian was his slave from one end of the year to the other. Tobacco was rarely off his hands, or out of his mouth. When he was not sowing its seed, transplanting it, working it, priming it, suckering it, worming it, cutting it, sheltering it or curing it, he was manipulating it or marketing it. Often he was busy with one crop of it before he had disposed of its predecessor. He discussed it at the country store and before and after service at the country church. At times, when it was being cured, he literally slept with it; and he smoked and chewed it as if he revelled in his servitude to it. He even composed a new glossary of terms to fit its exactions.

"Alack," wrote Dr. Alexander to Dr. Hall on one occasion, "when shall my ears cease to be molested with endless harangues upon tobacco? I declare it to be the most fertile subject known among men. The glossary of the planters would compose a volume, and their discourse is stark naught without an interpreter. What would you understand by such slang as this? 'Have you *primed* your *crap* Col. Gouge?' (Every man is on the army list.) 'No sir, I had to *clod* in May and my '*bacco* in the low grounds is *fired*.' 'I sent my last *crap* to Farmville; they made a *break* and said it was *funked too lean* and *fired* too much. It was *struck* too soon and was in *nice order*.' 'Well I've got through *priseing*. The weather was so *givy* that the tobacco was in *high order* to *come and go*, etc.' ""<sup>1</sup> (a)

The technical language of the planter was gibberish to Dr. Alexander, but not to one to the manner born, like Randolph. Writing to his niece from London on May 27, 1822, he said: "There were some noble pines at High

<sup>1</sup> July 3, 1827, 40 Yrs.' *Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 106.

Leigh which a Virginian overseer would soon have down for tobacco sticks."¹

Southside Virginia, during Randolph's career, was a good illustration of the economic peril which any community runs in having all its eggs in one basket. Between 1799 and 1830, the price of tobacco underwent some extraordinary fluctuations, and the prosperity of Southside Virginia rose and fell with them. The period between 1799 and 1816 was signalized by a remarkable improvement in the fortunes of its people. Upon this subject there are some timely remarks in the "Discourse by Hugh Blair Grigsby on the Lives and Characters of the Early Presidents and Trustees of Hampden-Sidney College," delivered at the centenary of the founding of the college on June 14, 1876. After saying that it was not until the close of the War of 1812 that the first burst of sunshine after the Revolutionary War descended upon Prince Edward County and its vicinage, he adds these words:

"Before that time, when the traveler visited the gatherings at churches and on court days, and entered the dwellings of the people he saw none of those signs of prosperity which 10 years later were everywhere visible. The houses were mainly of wood, and rarely had more than two rooms on a floor; the furniture was always made at home, was plain and not abundant, and even, in houses of men of wealth, paint was used sparingly, and in many cases, not at all. The dress of the inhabitants was mainly domestic and, when imported goods were used, a single suit of broadcloth or a dress of silk lasted for a number of years. Before 1815, four-wheeled carriages were rare, and were destitute of ornaments; the family vehicle was a large and massive gig, which could hold as great a weight as a single horse could pull. Before the close of 1815, a new era dawned: The high prices of tobacco were soon seen in the dress of the people, in the elegance of their carriages, and in the beauty of their horses; in the rise of many large and handsome wood and brick houses, and in the improvement of the face of

¹ Garland, v. 2, 180.

the country. Twelve years after 1815, when I attended a commencement of the college, the large collection of people of both sexes and of all ages, who filled every place in the church, and who were clad in modern and costly apparel, and the number of gigs and carriages, adorned with curtains and beautified with silver gilt, indicated the vast increase of the general wealth in that interval."<sup>1</sup>

But this advance of wealth must have been the increment of the earlier years after 1812, for, confessedly, the decade between 1820 and 1830 was one of such widespread pecuniary depression in Virginia that, to some eyes, it seemed as if the State was declining into a condition of almost hopeless atrophy.<sup>2</sup> The year 1819 was a year of general financial distress throughout the United States, and the effects of this distress in Southside Virginia are stated by Randolph in his pungent way in a letter written by him to Captain West, his sea-captain friend, on April 30, 1828.

"CARTERSVILLE, ON JAMES RIVER,  
April 30, 1828."

"MY DEAR CAPTAIN:—Just as I mounted my horse on Monday morning at Washington, your truly welcome and friendly letter was put into my hands. I arrived here this evening a little before sunset, after a ride on horseback of thirty-five miles. Pretty well, you'll say, for a man whose lungs are bleeding, and with a 'church-yard cough,' which gives so much pleasure to *some* of your New York editors of newspapers. . . . I am never so easy as when in the saddle. Nevertheless, if '*a gentleman*' (we are all *gentlemen* now-a-days) who received upwards of £300 sterling for me merely to hand it over, had not embezzled it by applying it to his own purposes, I should be a passenger with you on the eighth. I tried to raise the money by the sale of some property, that only twelve months ago I was teased to part from (lots and houses in Farmville, seventy miles above Petersburg, on Appomattox

<sup>1</sup> P. 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Wm. B. Giles*, by D. R. Anderson, 212.



river), but could not last week get a bid for it. Such is the poverty, abject poverty and distress of this whole country. I have known land (part of it good and wood land) sell for one dollar an acre, that, ten years ago, would have commanded ten dollars, and last year five or six. Four fine negroes sold for three hundred and fifty dollars, and so in proportion. But I must quit the wretched subject. My pay, as a member of Congress, is worth more than my best and most productive plantation, for which, a few years ago, I could have got eighty thousand dollars, exclusive of slaves and stock. I gave, a few years since, twenty-seven thousand dollars for an estate. It had not a house or a fence upon it. After putting it in fine order, I found that, so far from my making one per cent, or one-half or one-fourth of one per cent, it does not clear expenses by about seven hundred and fifty dollars per annum, over and above all the crops. Yet, *I* am to be taxed for the benefit of wool-spinners, &c., to destroy the whole navigating interest of the United States; and we find representatives from New-Bedford, and Cape Ann, and Marblehead, and Salem, and Newburyport, voting for this, if they can throw the *molasses* overboard to lighten the ship *Tariff*. She is a pirate under a black flag."<sup>1</sup>

No one had a keener sense than Randolph of the fact that the conduct of a plantation in Southside Virginia went round and round in a circle like a horse hitched to one of the revolving shafts which furnished the power for threshing wheat at granaries on the larger plantations in that region before the invention of the modern portable threshing-machine. (a) "Farming in Virginia," he said, "goes in a circle; the negroes raise the corn, the hogs eat the corn, and the negroes eat the hogs, &c."<sup>2</sup>

When Randolph wrote to Josiah Quincy that, if he came to Charlotte County, he would introduce him to a small school of intelligent freeholders, he was not over-appraising the character of his constituents. As a rule, they were

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 71, Nov. 4, 1843.

<sup>2</sup> *Recollections of a Long Life*, by Jos. Packard, 110.



remarkably well informed about the public men, and intimately conversant with the political issues, of their time; indeed, it would have been better for them, if they had imitated their fellow Democrats of the North, and not lost sight of the fact that Congress was a great business instrumentality as well as a theatre for oratorical displays and the conflict of political theories. Morris Birkbeck, an English traveler, visited Petersburg, Va., in 1817, and, discussing the Virginians that he met there, he says:

“I never saw in England an assemblage of countrymen who would *average* so well as to dress and manners. None of them reached anything like style, and very few descended to the shabby. As it rained heavily, everybody was confined the whole day to the tavern after the race, which took place in the forenoon. The conversation, which this afforded me an opportunity of hearing, gave me a high opinion of the intellectual cultivation of these Virginian farmers.”<sup>1</sup>

The compliment is all the more significant, as it was preceded by the averment that, while a Virginian planter was a Republican in politics, and exhibited the high spirit and independence of that character, he was a slave-holder, irascible, and too often lax in morals; and was said to carry a dirk about with him as a common appendage to the dress of the planter in that part of Virginia. It is not unlikely that some Southside planters did have such a weapon, because we know that on one occasion Randolph wrote to Theodore Dudley for a dirk which he had left behind him at Roanoke.<sup>2</sup> A gentry, that was not too peaceful for the duelling pistol, might well be contentious enough at times for the dirk.

One more quotation from the agreeable letters of Dr. James Waddell Alexander to Dr. Hall, and we shall be prepared to lift the curtain again upon the figure of Ran-

<sup>1</sup> *Notes on a Journey in America*, 3d Ed., London, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Farmville, Nov. 6, 1813, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 143.

dolph as he appeared upon the court-green rostrum of Southside Virginia.

"CHARLOTTE, APRIL 10, 1827."

"I do not remember in any 'letters from the South' a description of a Virginia court-day, and, as I know of nothing which exhibits in more lively colours the distinctive traits of the State character, I will employ a little time in sketching a scene of this kind, which presented itself on Monday, the 2d of April. The court of Charlotte Co. is regularly held upon the first Monday of every month, and there is usually a large concourse of people. This was an occasion of peculiar interest, as elections for Congress and the State Legislature were then to take place. As the day was fine, I preferred walking, to the risk of having my horse alarmed, and driven away by the hurly-burly of such an assemblage. In making my way along the great road, which leads from my lodgings to the place of public resort, I found it all alive with the cavalcades of planters and country-folk going to the raree show. A stranger would be forcibly struck with the perfect familiarity with which all ranks were mingling in conversation, as they moved along upon their fine pacing horses. Indeed, this sort of equality exists to a greater degree here than in any country with which I am acquainted. Here were young men, whose main object seemed to be the exhibition of their spirited horses, of the true race breed, and their equestrian skill. The great majority of persons were dressed in domestic, undyed cloth, partly from economy, and partly from a State pride, which leads many of our most wealthy men, in opposing the tariff, to reject all manufactures which are protected by the Government. A man would form a very incorrect estimate of the worldly circumstances of a Virginia planter who should measure his finances by the fineness of his coat. When I came near to the village, I observed hundreds of horses tied to the trees of a neighbouring grove, and further on could descry an immense and noisy multitude covering the space around the courthouse. In one quarter, near the taverns, were collected the mob, whose chief errand is to drink and quarrel. In another, was exhibited a fair of all kinds of vendibles, stalls of mechanics

and tradesmen, eatables and drinkables, with a long line of Yankee wagons, which are never wanting on these occasions. The loud cries of salesmen, vending wares at public auction, were mingled with the vociferation of a stump orator, who, in the midst of a countless crowd, was advancing his claims as a candidate for the House of Delegates. I threaded my way into this living mass, for the purpose of hearing the oration. A grey-headed man was discoursing upon the necessity of amending the State Constitution, and defending the propriety of calling a convention. His elocution was good, and his arguments very plausible, especially when he dwelt upon the very unequal representation in Virginia. This, however, happens to be the unpopular side of the question in our region and the populace, while they respected the age and talents of the man showed but faint signs of acquiescence. The candidate, upon retiring from the platform on which he had stood, was followed by a rival, who is well known as his standing opponent. The latter kept the people in a roar of laughter by a kind of dry humour which is peculiar to himself. Although far inferior to the other in abilities and learning, he excels him in all those qualities which go to form the character of a demagogue. He appealed to the interests of the planters and slave owners, he turned into ridicule all the arguments of the former speaker, and seemed to make his way to the hearts of the people. He was succeeded by the candidate for the Senate, Henry A. Watkins, of Prince Edward, a man of great address and suavity of manner; his speech was short but pungent and efficient, and, although he lost his election, he left a most favourable impression upon the public mind. We had still another address from one of the late delegates who proposed himself again as a candidate. Before commencing his oration, he announced to the people that, by a letter from Mr. Randolph, he was informed that we should not have the pleasure of seeing that gentleman, as he was confined to his bed by severe illness. This was a sore disappointment. It was generally expected that Mr. R. would have been present, and I had cherished the hope of hearing him once in my life. It would give you no satisfaction for me to recount to you the several topics of party politics upon which the several speakers dilated. We

proceeded (or rather as many as *could*, proceeded) to the courthouse, where the polls were opened. The candidates, six in number, were ranged upon the Justices' bench, the clerks were seated below, and the election began, *viva voce*. The throng and confusion were great, and the result was that Mr. Randolph was unanimously elected for Congress, Col. Wyatt for the Senate, and the two former members to the Legislature of the State. After the election, sundry petty squabbles took place among the persons who had been opposing one another in the contest. Towards night, a scene of unspeakable riot took place; drinking and fighting drove away all thought of politics and many a man was put to bed disabled by wounds and drunkenness. This part of Virginia has long been celebrated for its breed of horses. There is scrupulous attention paid to the preservation of the immaculate English blood. Among the crowd on this day, were snorting and rearing fourteen or fifteen stallions, some of which were indeed fine specimens of that noble creature. Among the rest, Mr. Randolph's celebrated English horse, Roanoke, who is nine years old, and has never been 'backed.' That which principally contributes to this great collection of people on our court days is the fact that all public business and all private contracts are settled at this time. All notes are made payable on these days, &c., &c. But you must be tired with Charlotte Court; I am sure that I am."<sup>1</sup>

What Dr. Alexander has to say about the drinking and fighting, in which the court day described by him ended, has not escaped, we are sure, the attention of the reader. That such excesses were more or less limited to the saturnalia of court day and to the rabble, we must infer from the tribute paid by him to the moral character of the people of Charlotte County, which we have already quoted, and from the fact that, in one of his letters to Dr. Hall, he also stated that temperance agitations were hardly necessary in Charlotte County as the body of the people had always been temperate.<sup>2</sup> The truth is that anyone who has

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 13, 1827, 40 *Yis.* *Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 98.

<sup>2</sup> Feb. 23, 1842, *Id.*, v. 1, 350.

witnessed the tremendous strides made by temperance in the matter of intoxicating liquors, within the 40 years preceding the adoption of the 18th amendment to the Federal Constitution, can easily decide how unfair it would be to judge the habits of Randolph's day by those of even forty years ago. We say nothing about fighting, because, wherever there is excessive drinking, there will be fighting. The companionship between the two is as close as that which led Alexander Pope in his sententious way to affirm that every liquorish mouth must have a lecherous tail. In Randolph's time excessive drinking was common in every part of our country. In his *Advice to Connecticut Folks*, published in 1786, Noah Webster, Jr., says:

"Not a mechanic or a laborer goes to work for a merchant but he carries home a bottle of rum. Not a load of wood comes to town but a gallon bottle is tied to a cart stake to be filled with rum. Scarcely a woman comes to town but a gallon bottle is tied to the cart stake to be filled with rum."

Webster computed that the people of Connecticut were then spending £ 90,000 a year for rum—a sum somewhat in excess of the expenses of the State Government. Judge Ebenezer Rockwood Hoar could recall the fact that in 1824, when he was eight years old, he and another boy picnicked in the woods, and that his mother, a Connecticut woman, gave them a bottle of punch to take with them. He also remembered that, during his boyhood, when any young child died at Concord, Massachusetts, "the pallbearers were selected among the young boys, and a room was set aside for them, in which a table was set with bottles of rum, whiskey and gin, and each of the boys freely partook."<sup>1</sup> And Josiah Quincy, Jr., is not picturing Silenus and his purple faced crew, but the members of one of the Blowing Clubs of Harvard in or about the year 1821, when he pens these words:

<sup>1</sup> Editorial in *New York Times*, Oct. 13, 1918.

“One of these societies, which is yet in existence, though it is to be hoped that the habits of its members have improved, was wont to have a dinner on exhibition days. After the exercises in the Chapel, the brethren would march to Porter's Tavern, preceded by a full band; and an attempt was made to return in the same way. First, would come the band, the only steady part of the show, whose music attracted a crowd of lookers-on. Then came, reeling and swaying from side to side, a mass of Bacchanals in all stages of intoxication.”<sup>1</sup> (a)

Everywhere in the United States, intoxicating liquors have now been placed under the ban of the law, and nowhere did the public opinion, which has brought about this result assert itself sooner than in rural communities in Virginia like Randolph's District. Indeed, in some of them the general prohibitory measure, which Virginia adopted in advance of the adoption of the 18th amendment to the Federal Constitution, and that amendment were merely declaratory of a condition which an irresistible public sentiment had already decreed. While we are dwelling upon a county court day in Charlotte County, we might add that nothing could be more strikingly indicative of the conservative character of the people of Randolph's District than the infrequency of the changes that have taken place in County Court Clerkships in it except as the result of death or resignation. Cumberland County was organized in 1748; Buckingham County in 1761; Prince Edward County in 1754, and Charlotte County in 1765. The first three clerks of Cumberland County—a father, son, and grandson,—held the office in succession for 100 years; the first three clerks of Prince Edward County held it for the same length of time; the first four clerks of Charlotte County held it for 98 years, and in 160 years Buckingham County has had but some six clerks.

<sup>1</sup> *Figures of the Past*, 43.

## CHAPTER VI

### Randolph on the Hustings

Such, so to speak, was the sounding-board under which Randolph spoke on the hustings in his District. How effectively he spoke to both the eye and the ear of his Southside Virginia auditors we are in a position fully to know. In his *Recollections*, William B. Green, a resident of Charlotte County, who cherished a decidedly hostile feeling towards him, says of him:

“When I first knew him he was about 35 or 36 years of age. He was then a Republican, and hated Federalism with a perfect hatred; but, notwithstanding this, he was always regarded in heart and in sentiment an Englishman to the core. In his earlier speeches, he was guilty of what might be considered as bad taste at the present day, namely: too frequently quoting and making allusions to English authors—Milton, Shakespeare, Tillotson, Sherlock, Burke, and so on. The coincidence of manner and thought between the speeches of Mr. Randolph and the writings of Laurence Sterne has always appeared to my mind so striking that I have not been able to resist the belief that he had, without making the acknowledgment, appropriated the manner and thought of that great writer. But, however this may have been, I am free to acknowledge that, in my poor judgment, Mr. Randolph was by far the greatest and most interesting speaker I have ever heard or ever expect to hear.”<sup>1</sup>

In the same *Recollections*, Green says of the speech made by Randolph at Charlotte Court House in 1833, in

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 27.



support of the series of resolutions, drawn by him, which condemned the Nullification Proclamation of Andrew Jackson:

“He was anxious . . . to have the speech which he was about to deliver fully taken down, but fearing that this might be impracticable, he insisted that the strong points and the biting parts at least should be preserved, and, in conclusion, said: ‘When I say anything that *tickles under the tail*, be sure to put it down.’ The speech was then commenced, and he spoke for a considerable time with overwhelming power and unsurpassed eloquence. The resolutions were then passed.”<sup>1</sup>

The following are the recollections of James W. Bouldin, another resident of Charlotte County:

“The first time I saw Mr. Randolph was at Prince Edward Court in October 1808 or 09. He was then at his zenith. For the first time since his first election, which was closely contested with Powhatan Bolling, some opposition began to discover itself to him in the District. It was said he was to speak, and I rode twenty miles to hear him. I remember well his appearance. When I saw him, he was approaching the court-house, walking very slowly, and alone—a tall, spare, straight man, very neatly dressed in summer apparel—shoes, nankeen gaiters and pantaloons, white vest, drab cloth coat of very fine quality, and white beaver hat. Though he had no shape but that he was forked, and had very long arms, all the way of the same size, with long bony fingers, with gloves on, still he had a most graceful appearance. His bow, notwithstanding it was slight, bending his body very little, and rather leaning his head back than forward, was winning to those to whom it was addressed, and seemed to carry with it marked attention and respect. *His eyes were hazel, of the darkest hue, and had the appearance of being entirely black, unless you were very near him.* They opened round, and, when open, nearly hid the lids, the dark long lashes only showing. Their brilliancy surpassed any I have ever seen. His appearance

<sup>1</sup> *Id.*, p. 178.



was remarkable and commanding, and would attract the attention of any one. His manner, though stately, possessed a charm to those to whom he wished to make himself agreeable, but had something terrible in it to those to whom he felt a dislike. To mere strangers it was simply lofty and graceful.

. . . . .

“Very soon after Mr. Randolph made his appearance, the people began to gather around the steps of the railing, where those who addressed them generally stood. Much curiosity was discovered to hear him, and I suppose of various kinds. Politicians, I imagine, wished to hear what he had to say on public affairs, and others for other reasons. My anxiety was to hear a great orator speak. He made but a short address; but I was much gratified. He was the first very great man I had ever heard deliver a public speech.

“I remember his commencement. It was thus: ‘After, an absence, fellow-citizens, of nearly six months, I have returned to the bosom of my constituents to be—chastised.’ . . .

“I remember little else now of what he said literally. He was defending himself against charges made of his having deserted the Republican party.

“As to his manner, its fascination was felt by all who ever heard him, and those who have not, can be little edified by any attempt to describe it.’<sup>1</sup> . . .

“Probably Mr. Randolph’s greatest efforts at speaking were made during the canvass with Mr. Eppes, in which he was beaten. I heard many of them, including the one at Prince Edward court, in the Fall preceding the election. He was told by a friend that this was considered to be the best speech he ever made. He replied that it was the only time he ever felt conscious of being eloquent, while speaking. He remarked that he felt the truth of what Mark Antony said—‘Passion, thou art catching’—that he felt the electricity passing from him to the crowd, and from the crowd back to him.

“I remember but one expression, literally, during that speech. Speaking of Bonaparte’s strides to universal dominion, he said: ‘He stood with one foot upon European, and the other upon American, shores. It is said that Moloch smiled

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 47.

at the blood of human sacrifice running at the foot of the altar; this great arch enemy of mankind is now grinning and smiling at American blood, flowing in support of his inordinate ambition.'

"He spoke for an hour, perhaps, and, when he concluded, I found myself musing and walking without any aim or object; and looking around, found the crowd gradually dispersing in the same mood. The Rev. Moses Hoge was sitting in a chair opposite the speaker, and remained till I observed him, still with his mouth open, and looking steadfastly in the same direction. Parson Lyle was standing by him. Said Mr. Hoge to Lyle, 'I never heard the like before, and I never expect to hear the like again.'"<sup>1</sup> . . . . .

"I remember *verbatim* a portion of the commencement of a speech he made at Charlotte Court, which, from its peculiar style of parenthesis, will be recognized by all who were acquainted with his manner of expression. He was excusing himself, on the ground of ill health, for declining the service of the people, after their long continued confidence in him. He said: 'I am going across the sea to patch up and preserve a shattered frame—a frame worn out in your service, and to lengthen out yet a little longer, (hitherto certainly) not a very happy existence; for, excepting the one upbraided by a guilty conscience, no life can be more unhappy than that, the days of which are spent in pain and sickness, and the nights in travail and sorrow.'

"During this address he remarked: 'I was going to say in the sincerity of the poet, but the sincerity of the poet is somewhat doubted;—I can say with truth, in the language of the poet,—

'Fare ye well; and if forever,  
Still forever, fare ye well.'

"Just as he had concluded, and was putting on his hat (he always spoke with it off), as he was stepping down to the next step, weak and somewhat tottering, he said: 'The flesh is indeed weak, though the spirit is strong.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 51.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 53.

“Mr. J. Robinson, a clergyman of distinguished ability, dined with me the day on which he made this speech. He was opposed to Mr. Randolph in politics, but was a great admirer of his genius. He remarked: ‘He had not supposed that Mr. Randolph had any pathos, as he had never before heard him in that strain, but that now he was forced to confess, after having heard all the distinguished orators of the then just past age, from Patrick Henry down, that Mr. Randolph was the most pathetic man he ever heard open his lips.’

*“I certainly saw tears roll down the cheeks of men who hated him then, and would curse his memory now if he were named in their presence.*

“I think these addresses did more to make firm his popularity, which, during the war, had been a little shaken, than anything he ever did. They soothed, softened, and set aside much of the bitterness which had been engendered during those bitter party conflicts.

“Though this was the first and only time I ever heard Mr. Randolph deliver a speech *wholly* in this strain of pathos, and sober wisdom and counsel, I had often witnessed touches of the same in other speeches, and his power of fascination in private, when he chose to exert it, with wonder and amazement.”<sup>1</sup>

These recollections are valuable, because, in addition to still more important reasons, they tend to confirm our faith in human testimony by disclosing physical circumstances which enable us to understand why some of Randolph’s contemporaries should have thought his eyes hazel and others black.

Of equal value are the recollections of William H. Elliott, a resident of Charlotte County:

“It has been said by some, who have heard Mr. Randolph both in Congress and on the hustings, that on the latter theatre he made his most fascinating and brilliant displays. I never heard him in Congress, but I cannot conceive that anything he uttered there could possibly surpass what I have heard on the hustings.

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 53.

“Most generally, whenever it was expected he would speak, a large proportion of the crowd would anticipate his arrival by some hour or two, and gather around the stand to secure a close proximity to the speaker. But when he was seen to move forward to the rostrum, then the court-house, every store, and tavern, and peddler’s stall, and auctioneer’s stand, and private residence, was deserted, and the speaker saw beneath him a motionless mass of humanity, and a sea of upturned faces. When he rose, with a deliberate motion, he took off his hat, and made a slight inclination of the body, a motion in which grace and humility seemed inexplicably blended. Now the grace was natural, but the humility was affected, but with such consummate address as to pass for genuine, except among those who know that *artis est celare artem*. His exordium was brief, but always peculiarly appropriate. His gestures were few and simple, yet exactly no more or fewer than what the occasion called for. With many public speakers, there seems to be an unpruned luxuriance of gesticulation, laboring most painfully to bring forth a mouse of an idea. But, in the case of Mr. Randolph, the idea was sure to be bigger than the gesture that accompanied it. His voice was unique, but yet so perfect was his pronunciation, and so sharp the outlines of every sound, that, as far as his voice could be heard, his words could be distinguished. In short, his speaking was exquisite vocal music. An accurate ear could distinguish, as he went along, commas, semi-colons, colons, full stops, exclamation and interrogation points, all in their proper places. In advert-ing to what he conceived to be the overruling agency of Providence in the affairs of man, no minister of the gospel could raise his eyes to Heaven with a look more impressively rever-ential. If the reader will look at Hamlet’s advice to the players, and conceive it to be punctually followed to the letter, Shakspeare will give him a better idea of Randolph’s oratory than he can derive from any other source. He seemed to have discarded from his vocabulary most of those sonorous *ses-quipedia* *verba*, which enter so largely into the staple of modern oratory, and to have trimmed down his language to the nudest possible simplicity consistent with strength. When he had gotten fully warmed with the subject, all idea of any-

thing nearer to perfection in eloquence was held in utter abeyance, and, when he concluded, all felt that they had never heard the like before."<sup>1</sup>

And these are the recollections of Dr. C. H. Jordan, a resident of Halifax County, Va., who, after saying that Randolph had the longest fingers that he had ever seen, goes on as follows:

"His head was not very large, but was symmetrical in the highest degree. His eyes were brilliant beyond description, indicating to a thoughtful observer a brain of the highest order. No one could look into them without having this truth so indelibly impressed upon his own mind that Time's busy Fingers may strive in vain to efface the impression. His eye, his forefinger and his foot were the members used in gesticulation; and, in impressing a solemn truth, a warning, or a proposition to which he wished to call the attention of his audience particularly, he could use his foot with singular and thrilling effect. The ring of the slight patting of his foot was in perfect accord with the clear musical intonations of that voice which belonged only to Mr. Randolph. In his appeals to High Heaven, the God of the Universe, the Final Judge of all the Earth, with his eyes turned heavenward, and that 'long bony finger' pointing to the skies, both gradually lowering as the appeal or invocation closed, the moral effect was so thrilling that every man left the scene with (for the time at least) a better heart than he carried there.

"The 'long bony finger' really appeared, when used in gesticulation, to have no bone in it; for, when it had accomplished what it had been called into action for, it would fall over on the back of his hand, almost as limp as a string, as if, having done its work, it sought repose."

Dr. Jordan then passes to the remarkable speech delivered by Randolph at Halifax Court House in the spring of 1827:

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 55.

“He came to breast the flood then rolling on from the western portion of the State for a convention. In spite of all his efforts, however, the stream increased, until it found temporary rest in the convention of 1829. It had been known for a long time and for many miles around, that he would be there upon that occasion, and would address the people on that question. The time drew nigh; the people everywhere were talking about it; expectation ran high. The day arrived and the crowd was immense, the largest I ever saw at a country gathering, variously estimated at from six to ten thousand, representing all the bordering counties in Virginia and North Carolina.

“As the hour approached, every countenance beamed with anticipation, or was grave with anxiety; for the weather was a little inauspicious, and Mr. Randolph’s health was bad. It was known that he had reached Judge Leigh’s, but fears were entertained that he might be deterred by the weather. About 10 o’clock, however, the thin clouds vanished, and, about 11, news passed like an electric current through the vast multitude that he was coming. In an instant, the crowd began moving slowly and noiselessly towards the upper tavern. Scarcely had they reached the summit of the slope between the court-house and the tavern, when they saw him coming on horseback, his carriage in the rear, driven by one of his servants. As he drew near, the crowd simultaneously divided to each side of the street, making a broad avenue along which he passed, hat in hand, bowing gracefully to the right and to the left, until he reached the lower tavern. The people, with uncovered heads, silently returned the graceful salutation. As he passed on to the lower tavern, the multitude followed in profound silence, not a shout nor a word being heard. Alighting and going in for a few moments, he soon reappeared, crossed the street, ascended the steps leading over to the court-house, and began.”

Here follows a résumé by Dr. Jordan of the topics on which the speech descanted, including the agitation which was under way for a change in the suffrage prescribed by the existing constitution of Virginia.

At one point, declares Dr. Jordan, he drew a striking and vivid picture of "the Old Ship of State" sailing amongst the breakers, "and, with extended arms and eyes raised to Heaven, he threw his body forward (as if to catch her), crying as he did so in a half-imploring, half-confident tone, 'God save the Old Ship!'" "It was," Dr. Jordan says, "the most solemn, the most impressive gesture I ever saw from any human being; and so powerful was the impression made, that the whole multitude, many with extended arms, seemed to move involuntarily forward, as if to help save the sinking ship."

From this point, Randolph passed on to other topics, which Dr. Jordan recalled without difficulty after the lapse of forty years; so lasting had been the impression made upon his mind by the speech; and, finally, Randolph concluded by warning his auditors against changes in the Federal Constitution, under which they had lived and enjoyed all the blessings of a free and happy people.

"Mind, gentlemen," Dr. Jordan remembers him to have said, "how you touch it; how you set about with innovation. Once gone, you may never restore it. Revolutions never go back, but on and on they roll; no returning tide brings repose; no bow of promise spans their dark horizon. On and on they go, until all is swallowed up in the abyss of anarchy and ruin!"

"During the long and entertaining speech," Dr. Jordan says, "every man of both races, seemed bound to the earth on which he stood; not one moved."

"The Convention, however, was called; Mr. Randolph was elected to it; served with characteristic fidelity, and returned to Halifax in 1829 [1830] to give an account of his stewardship. By his arduous labors in that body, his health had suffered greatly; he was too feeble to speak out doors, and the county court, then in session, tendered him the court-house, which he gratefully accepted. As he moved up to the bench, it was apparent to every one that he lacked the physical ability to entertain the people as he had done on the previous occasion. Taking his stand on the county court bench, and supporting



himself with one hand on the railing, and the other on his cane, he began by returning his thanks in a polite and graceful manner to the worshipful court for their kindness in suspending their business to accommodate one who needed so much their consideration. He told them it must be plain to all that it was the last speech he should ever make in Halifax. He gave a succinct statement of all the various alterations (he would not call them amendments) proposed to the Constitution, and advised the people to vote against them."

Randolph's voice, we are told by Dr. Jordan, was uncommonly shrill, "but was of that soft, flute-like character that always elicited admiration." Feeble as he was for nearly his whole life, he could, Dr. Jordan further declares, always so modulate it as to make every member of the largest assemblies distinctly hear every word that he uttered, and that without the least strain on his vocal or respiratory organs.<sup>1</sup>

A timely supplement to these recollections is a narrative by Col. Thomas S. Flourney, who, when a lad, with his father spent a night at Roanoke on the eve of the first speech at Halifax Court House described by Dr. Jordan.

"My father," this narrative says, "inquired after Mr. Randolph's health. His reply was: 'John, I am dying; I shall not live through the night.'"

"My father informed him that we were on our way to Halifax court. He requested us to say to the people on Monday, court day, that he was no longer a candidate for the Convention; that he did not expect to live through the night, certainly not till the meeting of the Convention.

"He soon began to discuss the questions of reform and the proposed changes in the Constitution. Becoming excited, he seemed to forget that he was a 'dying man.' In a short time, we were invited to tea, and, when we returned to his room, we found him again in a 'dying' condition; but, as before, he soon began to discuss the subject of the Convention; and, becoming

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 57.



more and more animated, he rose up in bed—my father and myself being the only auditors—and delivered one of the most interesting speeches, in conversational style, that it was ever my good fortune to hear, occupying the time, from half-past eight until midnight.

“The next morning, immediately after breakfast, Mr. Randolph sent for us again. We found him again in a ‘dying’ condition. He stated to us that he was satisfied that he would not live through the day, and repeated his request that my father would have it announced to the people of Halifax that he declined being a candidate for the Convention. Once more he became animated, while discussing the Convention, and kept us till 10 o’clock at his house. When we were about to start, he took solemn leave of us, saying: ‘In all probability you will never see me again.’

“Before we reached Clark’s Ferry, five miles distant, I heard some one coming on horseback, pushing to overtake us, which proved to be Mr. Randolph, with Johnny in a sulky following.

“We traveled on together until we came to the road leading to Judge Leigh’s. Mr. Randolph then left us, to spend the night with Judge Leigh. The next morning, Monday, he rode nine miles to court, where an immense crowd of people had assembled to hear him. He addressed them in the open air on the subject of the Convention in a strain of argument and sarcastic eloquence rarely equalled by any one.”<sup>1</sup>

Most vivid of all are these Reminiscences of James M. Whittle, a gifted lawyer of Pittsylvania County, Virginia:

“At March Term, 1821, of Prince Edward County Court, it was expected that Mr. John Randolph of Roanoke would be present, on his way home from Washington city, on the close of the then recent session of Congress. I was then a boy at school in the neighborhood—in my sixteenth year. The universal expectation of this event, as usual, induced a general desire among the people to look upon this strange man, as much so to those who had seen him from his youth up, [and] to his constituents, whom he had represented in Congress for

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 62.

more than twenty years, as to those who had derived their impressions of him from the tongue of rumor alone. It was near the time of the Congressional Election, for which he stood a candidate; and, in the session just ended, had been settled, as was supposed, the 'Missouri Question,' after [the] convulsive struggles of two sessions. The crowd found at court was much larger than usual, and throbbing with anxiety to see—hoping to hear—a man, so extraordinary in all respects, that a promiscuous mingling with my race, in many differing phases, in the long years, which have since rolled away, has failed to furnish me with a suggestion—much less a likeness—of him.

“In a short time, after reaching the court-house, groups of people were seen hurrying to a spot down the road some hundred yards off. Joining the throng, I followed on, and discovered a dense crowd surrounding a person in a sulky, drawn by a gray horse, and, behind it, a negro seated on another of the same color, apparently its match. The heads of these animals were lifted high above the spectators, and looked down upon them with disdainful pride. On approaching, it was observed that the sulky and harness were deep black, with brilliant plated mountings, the shafts bent to a painful segment of a circle, the horses of the best keep, as doubtless they were of the highest blood. The servant, who was of the profoundest sable, carried a high black portmanteau behind him, and was attired in clothing of the same hue. Quite a strong contrast—possibly designed—was exhibited between the masses of intense darkness and the plating, the horses, the teeth and shirt collar of the servant. The order of the whole equipage was complete. The tenant of the sulky was as frail a man as I have ever seen. He was conversing pleasantly with the people.

“I heard nothing he said. He soon bowed gracefully to the crowd, which gave way before him, and he passed on; it following him. The throng increased as he proceeded to an old-fashioned Virginia inn near the court-house, by which time it was swollen by the addition of most of the persons on the ground, and became a dense mass. A twitch was felt by some of the spectators at observing so delicate a man at the mercy of

apparently so terrific a horse, which seemed to have its driver completely in its power, but which he managed with entire composure. Mr. Randolph alighted with a feeble step, passed through the porch of the inn into a passage, followed by a crowd, and disappeared within a room, the door of which was immediately closed. The people remained before the door of the inn, awaiting his reappearance, without noise or confusion. After lolling awhile, Mr. Randolph came out and proceeded toward the court-house. The crowd followed—keeping a respectful distance; by his side, walked some of his elderly and prominent constituents, with whom he conversed familiarly on the way. It happened to me to have a position from which I could discern his form and action. He was the merest skeleton of a man; any boy of fifteen could, likely, have mastered him. His extreme emaciation may have magnified his apparent height, which was about six feet. There seemed to be a want of action about his knees, which were somewhat in-turned. He drew them up in walking, and did not throw his feet boldly forward. More than the usual amount of the bottom of the feet was seen as he moved, and he placed these directly forward as the Indians do. On reaching the court-house pale, he stopped and conversed with a good many people, when a lawyer came up and introduced one of his brethren to Mr. Randolph. The latter passed through the introduction with commanding dignity and grace. Having passed over the steps within the court-house yard, some of his constituents solicited him to speak to the people; this he seemed reluctant to do, but, after some importunity he consented, and retired to a bench near by, put his elbows about his knees, inserted his head between his hands and seemed to be in profound meditation for a few moments. In this position, the want of proportion between the length of his body and of his lower limbs was striking, so much so that his knees seemed to intrude themselves into his face. He then approached the steps with a languid and infirm tread, ascended them, took off his hat, and made his bow to his audience in the most impressive and majestic manner that can be conceived. It may be doubted whether there lives in America a man who can do this as he did it. His countenance and manner were solemn—

funereal. Subsequent information enabled me to account for what would seem to have been without occasion. He had just emerged from a contest in Congress, running through two sessions, into which he had thrown his whole power; the result of which had filled him with apprehensions of the ruin of the Union, and, from the rebound of the loosened tension, he was left sick and solemn. The outer man was now fully presented to those before him. He was evidently a great sufferer from disease, and, likely, the sturdy working of his impatient intellect had strained too severely the feeble case which contained it. He appeared to be the Englishman and Indian mixed; the latter assuming the outer, the former the larger, part of the inner, man. His dress was all English—all over. His hat was black; his coat was blue, with brilliant metallic buttons and velvet collar; his breeches and vest drab, with fair-topped English boots and massive silver spurs—likely they were ancestral; his watch ribbon sustained a group of small seals—heirlooms, it may be, from times beyond Cromwell. His age must have been about forty-three; his hair was bright brown, straight, not perceptibly gray, thrown back from his forehead and tied into a queue, neither long nor thick. His complexion was swarthy; his face beardless, full, round and plump; his eye hazel, brilliant, inquisitive, proud; his mouth was of delicate cast, well suited to a small head and face, filled with exquisite teeth, well kept as they could be; his lips painted, as it were, with indigo, indicating days of suffering and nights of torturing pain. His hands were as fair and delicate as any girl's. Every part of his dress and person was evidently accustomed to the utmost care.

“His face was the most beautiful and attractive to me I had almost ever seen. There was no acerbity about it that day, his manner was calm and bland, though sustained by a graceful and lofty dignity. It was apprehended that a body so frail encased a group of shattered and tremulous nerves, and that the prominence of his position, and what was expected of him, might put these in an ague of agitation. Though he was as much excited as a speaker could well be, yet he did not betray his emotion by any quivering of lip, tremor of a nerve, or hurry of a word. He seemed in this, as in most other

respects, to differ from all other men. He was calm, slow and solemn throughout his address. The text of it, as has been intimated, was the 'Missouri Compromise,' and he expended not more than fifteen minutes in its delivery. His manner was deliberate beyond any speaker I have ever heard. This so differed from my expectation of him, as to dispel the ideal of tempestuous rapidity, which his cynic and impassioned reputation had inspired. It was obvious, however, that the supreme mastery which he had over himself was essential to the deadly aim of his arrow, and the fatal mixing of the poison in which he dipped it. He stood firm in his position, his action and grace seemed to be from the knee up. His voice was that of a well-toned flageolet, the key conversational, though swelled to its utmost compass. The grandeur of his mien and his impressive salutation may have composed his audience into the deep silence which prevailed, but the uttering a few words disclosed a power of engaging attention which I have met with in no other man—his articulation. Without this, it is hard to conceive how, in the open air, he could have been so distinctly heard by so large a mass. He was greatly aided too by his self-possession, as in his feeble state it must have been essential to command every faculty and every art which could contribute to the result desired. Not only every word and syllable, but it seemed that every letter of every word in every syllable, was distinctly sounded (there was a perceptible interval, it appeared, between each of his words, as they dropped one by one from his lips); and that he had supplied himself with a given *quantum* of speech before he commenced, determined by its judicious use to accomplish a proposed effect. . . .

"I did not comprehend the subject he was discussing, nor know even its leading facts; but he dwelt chiefly on the dissolution of the Union as the effect of the compromise; and here Roscius did well act his part. As if startled by the bursting asunder of the materials of some massive building, in which he was, he drew up his shoulders, his head seemed to sink between them, his bust was bent forward, and his face filled with horror. His concluding words: 'We fought manfully the good fight, and we are beaten,' seem inadequate to any oratorical effect; but Roscius took them up, and equipped them for their

work. The speaker must allude to the faithful valor of the combat—how ‘manfully’ it was fought. Here the fever-parched lips were compressed, the finger pointed to the skies and, bowing in sad but lofty recognition of his fate, and with a countenance hung with pictures of anxiety, came the words —‘We are beaten’; and he retired.”<sup>1</sup>

When the Virginia Convention of 1829-30 adjourned, the first act of Randolph was to make this entry in his 1830 Journal: “Convention dissolved. *Laus Deo.*”<sup>2</sup> And his next was to render an account of his stewardship to his constituents at Charlotte Court House on court-day, in the month of April, 1830, and we have good reason to believe that his speech on this occasion was one of the most remarkable of his whole career. The Rev. Dr. Wm. S. Plumer declared that his judgment, after the lapse of nearly forty-seven years, was that it was one of the most effective speeches that he had ever heard. “It was conclusive,” he affirmed. “No one asked any questions. The old men wept.”<sup>3</sup> Speaking, in the course of the address, of the trust that had been committed to him by his constituents, after referring to himself characteristically as being full of bruises and putrefying sores from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, and solemnly asking, “People of Charlotte, which of you is without sin?” he exclaimed: “Take it back! Take it back!” with such a dramatic gesture, as if he were rolling a great stone from his breast, that one of his auditors afterwards described himself as instinctively recoiling in fear for his personal safety.<sup>4</sup> While Randolph was speaking, a piece of paper on which he had jotted some notes, slipped from his fingers, and fluttered down unnoticed by the throng to the feet of young Jacob Michaux, who quietly planted his foot on it with a view to preserving it as a souvenir, but so completely was his attention diverted from it by the sway of

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 64.

<sup>2</sup> *Va. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>3</sup> Bouldin, 169.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, 170.

Randolph's eloquence that he forgot all about it until the meeting had dispersed and he was a mile away from the scene.<sup>1</sup>

This time the dominant note of Randolph's address was pathos. On another occasion, one of his auditors, powerless any longer to repress his compassion when Randolph, to use one of his own expressions, was giving someone a "sack full of sair bones,"<sup>2</sup> cried out, "Stop! Stop! Mr. Randolph, I would not treat a dog so."<sup>3</sup>

Nor are we at a loss to know just what Randolph was on the hustings during the last years of his life, when he was the object of an almost morbid public curiosity; partly because of the eccentricities and excesses, which made him a kind of raree show, and partly because of the garrulous, yet sparkling, stream of improvisation which he was still capable of pouring out without stint, despite a pathetically diseased body and mind. Among his auditors, after he returned from Russia, was, as we have seen, the Rev. John S. Kirkpatrick, (*a*) who has also sketched his personal appearance for us in these words:

"The first time I saw him was at Prince Edward C. H., November, 1831. I was a student at Hampden-Sidney College, a mile and a half distant from the Court House. It being what was then known as County Court Day, occurring once in each month, the students, by usage, rather than by formal law, had permission to spend the day, with all the other citizens of the County, including the members of the Faculty, in the Court-House Yard. Not knowing that Mr. Randolph would be there, or that anything of general interest was contemplated, I went to the place merely to show respect to a time-honored usage, the more conscientiously, because I thus honored and helped to perpetuate the prescriptive monthly holiday. When I reached the place, about eleven o'clock, Mr. Randolph was then speaking, but I do not think he had been speaking longer than ten or fifteen minutes. I remained in

<sup>1</sup> Marion Harland's *Autobiography*, 317.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 159.

<sup>3</sup> Bouldin, 95.



the Court House where the meeting was held, standing on my feet, from 11 o'clock until sunset, all the while, with the exception of twenty to thirty minutes, which were occupied by two other gentlemen in some personal explanations; all the while listening to Mr. Randolph.

"When, after some effort, I obtained a position which gave me a view of him, I saw an old man, very feeble, with a minimum of flesh, just enough to authorize you to affirm that it was not a skeleton or mummy you were looking at; the skin of the face wearing that special hue into which the soft, roseate complexion of the young woman is often changed by time and exposure; of medium height, yet seeming tall from the extreme slenderness of the figure; sitting in the chair appropriated to the presiding officer of the Court; a friend seated on each side of him to assist him in rising when, for a change of position, or in the flush of unusual excitement from speaking, he would stand for two or three minutes; having a small table nearly in front of him, within easy reach, on which were placed four bottles, of the ordinary size of 'black bottles'; two of them closely covered with buckskin, and two with green baize, flanked by as many glasses—some wine-glasses, and others ordinary tumblers. His features were regular and delicately shaped; the forehead low, so as to need no banging to conceal the towering intellect; the chin long and the more pointed by the want of flesh. His hair, which was of the special shade of black I have often noticed in the hair of our American Indians (he was proud of his alleged descent from the Princess Pocahontas), was softened by intermingled threads of silver gray; it was parted in the middle and was long enough to fall on his shoulders. His chin was as innocent of a covering as when on that memorable day in the porch of the old Tavern at Charlotte C. H. he was derided by the admirers of Patrick Henry as the beardless boy. The most striking feature was the eye; and that is simply indescribable. It was dark; to me it seemed deeply black; and yet Mr. Garland, his most accurate biographer, says it was of dark hazel color. The eyes were small, and the muscles and ligaments so disposed around the balls as to cause the eyes to appear circular or nearly so. But, although the aspect was not fierce, nor otherwise unpleasant,



how penetrating the glance from those twinkling orbs! They seemed to look through you into your very soul, and to read your thoughts and inmost feelings. Then they were so rapid in their motion, it was as though they were turned on you, and on all in every part of the room at the same instant. There was no escape from their ubiquitous scouting. I have never seen eyes in which there was so marvelous power—that had in them so incisive oratory. And yet the eyes were hardly equal in potency to the voice. That was clear, ringing, shrill, piercing; still, not harsh nor rasping; on the contrary, it was smooth, melodious, musically charming. It was, to use the terms of the music-books, set on the key of the female voice, an octave higher than that of the male; the key so effectively adapted to the purpose of scolding that some who possess it seem to feel it would be a neglect of opportunity not to employ it in its appropriate work.

“On the two occasions when I heard Mr. Randolph in public speeches, he never raised his voice above the conversational tone; yet he was heard in every part of the large room by every person present, and would have been heard, if the room and the assembly had been four times as large. With most speakers there is what I will venture to call a partial separation or want of perfect coalescence, between the sound of the voice and the articulated word. With him, all the sound was absorbed and embodied in the word; and you got the word as it were without the sound.

“Much has been said of his long, bony forefinger that was so potent a weapon of his oratory. The finger was not abnormally long; only its extreme tenuity made it appear so. He did use it much, and most tellingly; I never saw him use any other gesture. When he would raise his hand, all the fingers closed except that historic forefinger, and he would shoot an arrowy word of sarcasm or irony from its point with the full impulse of his elastic voice. If the victim did not writhe when the bolt struck him, it was because he wore an armor of triple brass, either of stolid insensibility or else of conscious integrity. No one, who knew anything personally of Mr. Randolph, but felt he would have understood little or nothing, if he had not known the physical man.”

The personal attacks made by Randolph on this occasion on Judge Bouldin and Dr. Crump we have already narrated as Dr. Kirkpatrick narrates them. After recalling them, his reminiscences continue as follows:

“What, may be asked, was Mr. Randolph speaking about, the rest of the time? If the question were, what was he not speaking about, I might be bold enough to essay an answer that should, in the main, be responsive thereto; but not to the question, as it stands, unless you will allow me to put the answer in the hackneyed: *De omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*. For the most part, his remarks followed one another on no other principle governing them than that of involuntary suggestion. They seemed to run riot, without any act of the will to control the selection, the order, or the limits. Let me give you an example: Once, and once only, he entered into a formal argument in support of a proposition he enunciated. It was to show the unconstitutionality of the United States Bank. He laid down some premises with precision, and began, but had just begun to reason from them, when he found, or made, occasion to employ an illustration. This was one I have often heard since, but, being then new to me, I remember it; the story of Sir Isaac Newton and the two openings, one big and the other little, side by side, which he ordered to be made in the bottom of the door of his room, for the ingress and egress of a favorite cat and her kitten. He declared, with apparent self-satisfaction, that Sir Isaac, profound philosopher as he was reputed to be, did not know that a hole large enough for the passing in and out of the cat would be large enough, and not too large, for a similar use by the kitten. He dropped his argument against the bank, mounted the illustration from Sir Isaac, ran a tilt against philosophers, one and all, against the institutions of learning in which, and the systems of instruction under which, they were reared; dealing his blows right and left; one of them striking Hampden-Sidney College hard by, its learned professors and unlearned students; thus rampaging in the boundless profusion of figures belonging to invective rhetoric, until some fresh object, crossing the field of his imagination, tempted him to a new encounter, whether in unhorsing

knights, routing armies, storming castles, or boxing with windmills.

“So he went on from hour to hour, a ‘free lance,’ challenging all comers. Public measures were alluded to, but never discussed; public men were named, sometimes denounced in terms of bitterness, sometimes gibbeted with ridicule, but never any of them commended out and out, except Andrew Jackson and Nat Macon, of North Carolina. Alas! on the other occasion when I heard him, one year later, Andrew Jackson was struck from the short roll, and Nat Macon stood there alone. . . .

“I must tell you more particularly how he disposed of Chief Justice Marshall, the manner of it is so characteristic of the orator and so illustrates the feature of his oratory last mentioned; its fitful zigzagging hither and thither, verging on incoherency. He had, with a continuity in the tenor of his remarks, quite unusual with him that day, exposed and deplored what he was pleased to style the decay of his beloved Virginia. He spoke with great plainness of the extravagance of the people, those of his own District included, in their house furnishings, their table supplies, their dress, equipages, and everything on which money could be expended; how they were rearing their sons in idleness, and their daughters in fashionable frivolities; and how, as the consequence, they were sinking more deeply and hopelessly in debt, and were deteriorating in moral worth. His tone was dolorous and extremely despondent. It was as though he wielded the paternal rod, and had many doubts of its remedial efficacy. At the close of the jeremiad, he remarked that it gave him no pleasure, but much pain, to speak thus, nor was it his purpose to give them pain, but to benefit them by pointing out to them their faults and their dangers. ‘Just as a surgeon,’ he proceeded, ‘performs an operation, not to inflict suffering, but to relieve a malady. Dr. Jackson, of Philadelphia, has lately performed a critical operation on the honored Chief Justice of the country. You all know it was no part of his wish to inflict a single pang, but that his sole design was to alleviate suffering, and preserve the valuable life of his subject. And I am glad that Dr. Jackson succeeded in the operation,—that he has restored the Chief Justice to his health, to his friends, to his country, and to

his seat on the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States where God knows he ought never to have been put. He is a great man and a good man; no greater or better man has ever lived in our country, and yet, if he should be Chief Justice thirty years longer, he will construe all our liberties away from us.' He did not permit Hampden-Sidney College to escape with the one pass at it which has been alluded to. He returned to the charge, although this time the aim was less at the College than at the Theological Seminary, which stands not a quarter of a mile distant from it. Speaking of himself, as he frequently did through the day, just then of the self-denials he had been compelled to exercise since he had attained his legal majority, he stated that, when he came into the possession of his patrimony, he found it involved in debt to the extent of nineteen shillings in the pound. To save the property, which had descended to him as a sacred trust from his ancestors, he had worked hard and lived poor. At last, he had succeeded in the great aim of his life. 'During the sitting of the late Virginia Convention,' he went on to say, 'I paid the last farthing of the debt, and got a receipt discharging me from the last obligation imposed by it—a paper which I would not exchange for a diploma from any of your boasted colleges, not even for one from your great Hampden-Sidney over there; no, not if that were backed up by one from your Union Theological Seminary, where you have a set of young men lying in the shade enjoying themselves, whilst their agents are traversing the country begging money to support them in their idleness!' And, attuning his voice to its keenest pitch of sarcastic virulence, he thrilled out: 'And these claim to be, *par excellence*, the followers of our Saviour, who never wanted money but once in his life, and then He got it out of a fish's mouth.'"

The next time that Dr. Kirkpatrick heard Randolph was at Charlotte Court House more than a year after he had heard him at Prince Edward Court House. It was on the occasion when Randolph brought forward his resolutions, condemning the Nullification Proclamation of Andrew Jackson; and this was what Dr. Kirkpatrick

has to say in regard to the speech delivered by Randolph then:

“He was in dead earnest now; and, having an object and an antagonist, his speech, although largely discursive and episodic, as were all his speeches, had far more connection between its topics and unity of purpose than the former one. He began speaking about 11 o'clock, and did not leave the room until after nightfall. A part of the time, say one hour in all, was taken up with the formalities of appointing a committee to draught resolutions, and of voting on the paper which was presented; Mr. Randolph, I may interpolate, framed the resolutions with his own hand, and did the major part of the voting. The rest of the time he was speaking, or, at least, talking, sitting, as on the former occasion, because too feeble to stand, with his supporters, his body supporters, I mean, at his side; the principal one of them being his half-brother, Ex-Governor Beverley Tucker, then of Missouri, and with the indispensable bottles of medicine, (there were only three of them this time) on a table within his reach. He was even more attenuated in flesh and helpless as to motion than when I first saw him; but his quivering eye had lost nothing of its nimbleness and fire, and his voice none of its marvelous properties—in him alone not incompatible with each other—of resonant shrillness and bewitching melody. Again, I must decline any attempted analysis or compendium of his speech. It was controllingly personal, personal in both aspects of the term, as relating to himself, and as relating to other individuals. That was always a characteristic of his public addresses. He made every apology he could well do for the implied treachery of ‘Andrew Jackson, Esq.’ (he never called him Squire Jackson) to his former principles, and to the party to which he owed his elevation to the presidency. The explanation tendered was that Jackson had permitted a set of men, holding subordinate positions in and around the White House, to acquire an undue and corrupting influence over his judgment, and prejudices, by flattery, subserviency, and other arts of the sycophant. To this set he applied the adhesive, blistering nickname, ‘Kitchen Cabinet,’ afterward extensively adopted,

but that day, as I suppose, first heard. He averred very confidently that Jackson did not write the Proclamation; and here his exact words without mutilation, retrenchment, or softening down, must be used; else the whole effect will be lost. They are engraved on my memory; I have only to copy the inscription: 'Jackson did not write that Proclamation. Not that he does not possess the requisite intellectual ability, but that he has not the literary culture. I know who did write it, and I will prove to you I am right. If you please, I will put the proof in the form of a syllogism, thus! The man who wrote that Proclamation wields a pen such as no man in the United States but himself can wield; Edward Livingston of Louisiana, the present Secretary of State, wields a pen such as no man in the United States but himself can wield; therefore, Edward Livingston wrote the Proclamation. Fellow-citizens, he is a man of splendid abilities, but utterly corrupt. He shines and stinks like rotten mackerel by moonlight.'” (a)

And this is the description given us by Wm. M. Moseley, of Danville, Virginia, of a later speech delivered by Randolph:

“The last public speech of Mr. Randolph was delivered at Buckingham Court-house in the year 1833, he then being on his way to Philadelphia, where he died shortly after. He was travelling by private conveyance, accompanied by his two favorite servants, Juba and John. His expected arrival had been previously announced, and, it being the regular monthly term of the county court, as might have been expected, the attendance was unusually large, most of the old citizens of the county being prompted by a desire to see their former representative in Congress once more, and to hear him speak, perhaps for the last time. Those who had never seen him, but who had heard of his reputation as a speaker, determined to avail themselves of this opportunity of seeing and hearing one of whom so much had been said.

“He reached the village at about eleven o'clock A.M., by which time a large concourse of people had assembled upon the court yard, and along the principal street, all anxiously looking

for the arrival of this distinguished personage: . . . He was immediately conducted to the court-house and occupied the judge's seat, from which, in a sitting posture, after the large court-room had become filled to its utmost capacity, he proceeded to deliver a speech, in the making of which he seemed to have had no special object other than that of giving his opinion as to matters and things in general. Public men and public measures of the past as well as of the present seemed to be passing in review before him, and for each of whom he seemed to have some unkind remembrance. His whole speech, if such it might be called, evinced an unhappy state of mind, if not a disordered intellect. No class and no profession escaped his bitter invective and withering sarcasm. Nothing either in Church or State seemed to be progressing according to his liking.

“At the close of his disconnected harangue, but few even of his old constituents ventured to approach him with anything like familiarity; not knowing how such advances might be received.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 160, 161.



## CHAPTER VII

### **General Observations on Randolph as an Orator**

Before passing from this branch of our subject, the reader may pardon us for making a few observations of our own on Randolph as an orator, suggested by close familiarity with his printed words. First, let us say that the reports of his Congressional speeches must, in many instances, be far from accurate. Their fidelity, we know, was frequently impeached by him. But what we are mainly concerned about is their failure to justify the idea which has come down to us that his chief weapons in debate were the tomahawk and the scalping-knife. These reports, as we have seen, reveal some witty thrusts, some withering sarcasms, and some bitter personalities. We say *witty* thrusts only because Randolph was rarely, if ever, humorous; but we cannot see that he habitually so far transcended the ordinary moderation of debate as to be justly placed, as he has so often been, in the same savage class as Powhatan or Opechancanough. Either much of the acerbity of his Congressional speeches has been sweetened by judicious revision, or the terrifying effect, so often attributed to his eloquence, must have been very much intensified by the rapt attention which he usually commanded, his dramatic manner, and the peculiar physical apparatus by which his rhetorical effects were produced; that is to say: the tall skeleton figure, so suggestive of Death and his dart; the strange voice, usually as musical as a flute but as shrill at times, when rasped by



uncommon excitement, as that of a pigeon-hawk starting off full-tilt after his panic-stricken quarry, and the lean, javelin-like fore-finger, which Von Holst says was the terror of all the little and sinful spirits in the House of Representatives.<sup>1</sup> Extraordinary powers of sarcasm and invective he unquestionably had, irrespective of these personal characteristics, and they were sometimes, as in the Virginia Convention of 1829-30, unwarrantably abused, to be sure. But it is only fair to him to say that they were generally wreaked upon depravity, cant, conceit or, incompetence.

Sawyer, as we have seen, speaks of Randolph's remarkable powers of retribution as if they never pushed his usual courtesy in debate aside unless called into play by some real provocation. This idea, however, must be adopted with very decided qualifications; as witness his general attitude towards Henry Clay down to the time of his duel with him, and afterwards, and his supercilious treatment of Chapman Johnson in the Virginia Convention. (a) But the idea is sufficiently supported by the facts to suggest some modification of the traditional view of Randolph as a mere malignant *sagittarius*.

His Blifl and Black George attack upon Clay was matched by utterances of his equally severe. When Richard Rush was appointed to the office of Secretary of the Treasury, he said: "Never were abilities so much below mediocrity so well rewarded; no, not when Caligula's horse was made Consul."<sup>2</sup> It is not surprising that Rush should have been stung by this remark into publishing the essay on Randolph, signed "Julius," which for black, undiluted bile hardly has its fellow. Dulcified a little by an occasional compliment, it would have been a truly telling satire.

Of an ambitious man, with little native ability, Randolph said that his mind was like the lands at the head-

<sup>1</sup> *Constitutional History of U. S.*, 1750-1832, p. 334.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 317.

waters of the Monongahela; naturally poor and made still poorer by excessive cultivation.<sup>1</sup>

In the book by Adlai E. Stevenson, entitled, *Something of Men I Have Known*, we find this story about Randolph:

“A colleague from ‘The Valley’ probably remembered him well to the last. That colleague, recently elected to fill a vacancy, caused by the death of a member of long service, signalized his entrance into the House by an unprovoked attack upon Mr. Randolph. The latter, from his seat nearby, listened with apparent unconcern to the fierce personal assault. To the surprise of all, no immediate reply was made to the speech, and the new member flattered himself, no doubt, that the ‘grim sage’ was for once completely unhorsed. A few days later, however, Randolph, while discussing a bill of local importance, casually remarked: ‘This bill, Mr. Speaker, lost its ablest advocate in the death of my lamented colleague, whose seat is still vacant.’”<sup>2</sup>

A similar story is told by W. H. Sparks:

“I remember, upon one occasion, pending the debate upon the Missouri question, and when Mr. Randolph was in the habit of almost daily addressing the House, that a Mr. Beecher, of Ohio, who was very impatient with Randolph’s tirades, would, in the lengthy pauses made by him, rise from his place and move the previous question. The Speaker would reply: ‘The member from Virginia has the floor.’ The first and second interruption was not noticed by Randolph, but, upon the repetition a third time, he slowly lifted his head from contemplating his notes, and said: ‘Mr. Speaker, in the Netherlands, a man of small capacity, with bits of wood and leather, will, in a few moments, construct a toy that, with the pressure of the finger and thumb, will cry, “Cuckoo! Cuckoo!” With less of ingenuity, and with inferior materials, the people of Ohio have made a toy that will, without much pressure, cry, “Previous Question, Mr. Speaker! Previous question, Mr. Speaker!”—at the same time designating Beecher by pointing

<sup>1</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>2</sup> P. 391.

at him with his long skeleton-like finger. In a moment, the House was convulsed with laughter, and I doubt if Beecher ever survived the sarcasm."<sup>1</sup>

Of Philip P. Barbour, who was a close reasoner, and his brother James Barbour, who is supposed to have been too much of a declaimer, Randolph once said that Phil. could split a hair but that Jim could not hit a barn door.<sup>2</sup> But this was not so pointed as the couplet which some wag wrote upon the walls of the House:

"Two Barbours to shave our Congress long did try,  
One shaves with froth; the other shaves dry."<sup>3</sup>

Governor James H. Pleasants, Randolph asserted on one occasion, was like some of his (Randolph's) blooded horses: "too weak for the plow, and too slow for the turf."<sup>4</sup>  
(a)

After the political tergiversation of Samuel Dexter, of Massachusetts, Randolph termed him, "Mr. Ambi-Dexter."<sup>5</sup>

Never did a man have a cleverer gift of minting phrases that passed into general circulation.

Benjamin Hardin, of Kentucky, a vigorous but unpolished speaker, was "a carving knife whetted on a brickbat."<sup>6</sup>

The wavering Edmund Randolph was "the chameleon on the aspen, always trembling, always changing."<sup>7</sup>

Of Robert Wright and John Rea (Ray) he said that the House exhibited two anomalies: "A Wright always wrong; and a Ray without light."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Memories of 50 Yrs.*, by Wm. H. Sparks, 237.

<sup>2</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>3</sup> *The Memories of 50 Yrs.*, by W. H. Sparks, 233.

<sup>4</sup> Bryan MSS.

<sup>5</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 352.

<sup>6</sup> *Wm. Fitzhugh Gordon*, by Armistead C. Gordon, 278, Loughborough MSS.

<sup>7</sup> *Life of Thos. Jefferson*, by Tucker, v. 1, 501 (note).

<sup>8</sup> Bryan MSS.

The politic and secretive Van Buren, Randolph said, "rowed to his object with muffled oars."<sup>1</sup> (a)

Of a cautious statesman, he said that, under his direction, the Ship of State might never take a prize, but it would probably never become one.<sup>2</sup>

Benton's four-day speech, he observed, consumed one day more than the French Revolution (of 1830).<sup>3</sup>

Yes, Thomas Ritchie (the distinguished editor of the Richmond *Enquirer*) did have seven principles, but they were the 5 loaves and the two fishes.<sup>4</sup>

"Clay's eye is on the Presidency; and my eye is on him."<sup>5</sup>

Turning away from a lady who had been pouring her sympathy with the struggling Greeks into his ear, Randolph pointed to a group of ragged little negroes near the steps of her home and exclaimed: "Madam, the Greeks are at your door!"<sup>6</sup>—words that soon winged their way to every part of the United States.

Referring to the naval strength of England, and to Madison's pamphlet on neutral rights, he said: "Against 800 ships in commission we enter the lists with a three-shilling pamphlet."<sup>7</sup>

Other epigrams of his were these: "The bad blood *will* show in some part of the four-mile heat."<sup>8</sup>

"An English noble has but one son, all the rest are bastards."<sup>9</sup>

"England is Elysium for the rich; Tartarus for the poor."<sup>10</sup>

"I am an aristocrat; I love liberty, I hate equality."<sup>11</sup>

"Asking one of the States to surrender part of her sov-

<sup>1</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Reminiscences of J. R.*, by Robt. L. Dabney, *Union Seminary Mag.*, v. 6 (1894-5), 14-21. Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>5</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>6</sup> Bouldin, 113.

<sup>7</sup> *Memoirs of Wm. Wirt*, by J. P. Kennedy, v. 1, 328.

<sup>8</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

ereignty is like asking a lady to surrender part of her chastity."<sup>1</sup>

"New Orleans is the key to our strong-box."<sup>2</sup>

"The three degrees of comparison—begging, borrowing, and stealing."<sup>3</sup>

"A rat hole will let in the ocean."<sup>4</sup>

"It is a turnstyle; it is in everybody's way but it stops no one."<sup>5</sup>

"Poverty, that nurse of genius, though she sometimes overlays it."<sup>6</sup>

"Dogmatism is puppyism matured";<sup>7</sup>—but is not this older than Randolph?

"Stick to a friend a *little* in the wrong."<sup>8</sup>

"That most delicious of privileges—spending other people's money."<sup>9</sup>

His violent prepossessions in favor of the Virginian *viva voce* mode of voting hurried him into the assertion that the ballot box was Pandora's box.<sup>10</sup>

"Denouncing me! That is strange. I never did him a favor."<sup>11</sup>

"No man was ever satisfied to be half a king."<sup>12</sup>

The Northern Democrats with Southern principles were "doughfaces"; another phrase which was soon on the tip of every tongue in the country.<sup>13</sup>

Clever, too, was his saying: "There must be something for the shilling gallery as well as the Pit."<sup>14</sup>

Turnbull's painting of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, in which the human leg has such inordinate

<sup>1</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1805-7, 353.

<sup>3</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>4</sup> *Debates of Va. Conv.*, 1829-30, 319.

<sup>5</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>6</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>7</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> *Something of Men I have Known*, by Adlai E. Stevenson, 391.

<sup>12</sup> Letter to Monroe, Sept. 16, 1806, *Monroe Papers*, Libr. Cong., v. 11.

<sup>13</sup> McMaster's *Hist. of U. S.*, v. 4, 591.

<sup>14</sup> Letter to J. H. Nicholson, Bizarre, Dec. 4, 1809, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

prominence, became known far and wide by the name that he gave it: "shin-piece."<sup>1</sup>

A portion of the architecture of the Senate Chamber he ridiculed as "corn stalk columns and corn-cob capitals."<sup>2</sup>

But, after all, Randolph's best epigram was this golden sentence: "Life is not so important as the duties of life."<sup>3</sup>

A good pendant to it is that other pithy observation of his: "We all know our duty better than we discharge it." Nor should we overlook two other weighty utterances of his, notable for their sententious conciseness, if for nothing else: "Time is at once the most valuable and the most perishable of all our possessions." "All of us have two educations; one which we receive from others; another, and the most valuable, which we give ourselves."

The stamp on his phrases was regarded with so much popular favor that his mintage, it must be confessed, was sometimes given a fictitious value. Rather overstrained rhodomontade has always seemed to us to be his famous vaunt that the Minute Men of Culpeper County, Virginia, who acquitted themselves so gallantly during the American Revolution "were raised in a minute, armed in a minute, marched in a minute, fought in a minute, and vanquished in a minute." It is hard to transform either the organization, the march or the victory of a military force into the "Cynthia of a minute."<sup>4</sup>

At times, Randolph's wit could even overcome the surliness of a foreign tongue. Not so good as Dean Swift's inimitable, "*O Mantua nimium vicina Cremonae!*" when he saw a violin swept from a table by a lady's dress, and yet not bad, was Randolph's rejoinder to Samuel W. Dana in the House: "*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*"

Some Congressional orators have excelled Randolph in

<sup>1</sup> *Register of Debates*, 1827-28, v. 4, part 1, 942.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Rufus King*, ed., by Chas. R. King, v. 6, 168. (note).

<sup>3</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>4</sup> *Hist. Cols. of Va.*, by Howe, 237.

depth of research, in sweep of vision and sympathy, in thoroughness of exposition, and in capacity for closely knit and long-sustained trains of reasoning; but which one of them has ever outshone him in those bright fields over which the human spirit sparkles or flames in its kindling moments? Ingenuity, Wit, Fancy, Imagination, Eloquence, Intuitive Sagacity, and occasionally, a rare gift of Vaticination light up the drab and commonplace Congressional background of his speeches as the rays of the sun reflected from some glassy or metallic surface are sometimes seen to light up a sullen hillside. To read the speeches of Randolph's earlier fellow Congressmen, which for the most part are now as lifeless as burnt-out fuses, and then to turn to one of his speeches is like what it formerly was to sit in a theatre at night and to have all the gas jets in it, from dome to pit, suddenly lifted up the fraction of an inch higher. Whatever else Randolph may be, he is to his present reader, as he was to his contemporary auditor, always interesting. The moment he appears before the curtain the orchestra strikes up and the movement from beginning to end is *allegro*. He uttered many immoderate and even some bigoted words, and occasionally he uttered a shallow one, though nothing can be truer than the claim so frequently made that robust common sense was the real basis of his intellectual character. The Reverend Dr. Conrad Speece, of Virginia, used to say that he would rather hear the nonsense of John Randolph than the sense of any other man; and even Randolph's wit, to use a fine general definition of wit by Alphonse Karr, was often only "reason armed." But, when he rose to speak in the House, his hearers had no inclination except to sit mute and to give themselves up to a rhetorical spell which made them feel as if they were listening to some unique being, whose classic eloquence, freed from all pedantry by the breath of the dewy fields and forests of the plantation and the fuller knowledge of

men and man's estate which comes from daily contact with human beings and human affairs, had been formed not in the ordinary school of Congressional declamation, but in some school where the open face of Nature, the *agora* and the Academy had each been a preceptress. Randolph's speeches in Congress were frequently garnished with apt quotations from Latin and English poetry and allusions to such Homeric heroes as Nestor, Achilles, and Hector; indeed with references to almost every province of human learning, for his memory retained impressions as faithfully as a baked tile. His diction, unstudied as it was, though sometimes in his later years encumbered with too many parentheses, was eminently scholarly, and at times even lofty, and was always not only pure, nervous, and correct, but finished almost *ad unguem*. No speech, however impressive at the time, ever lives unless it is good literature; and the charm of reading whatever Randolph spoke or wrote is essentially a literary charm. But, so far as we are aware, there is not the slightest evidence to show that any member of Congress ever sincerely objected to his speeches because they were accompanied by Latin or English quotations, or on the ground that they were scholastic in any respect. The attitude of Congress towards them appears to have been that of the character in "The Elder Brother" of Beaumont and Fletcher, who said:

"Though I can speak no Greek, I love the sound on't,  
It goes so thundering as it conjured devils."

It enjoyed them and drank them in with keen eagerness, perhaps because it approved Randolph's own saying that it is a good plan to hitch up a colt with a dull horse. If they had been the speeches of a pedant or a mere scholar, this, of course, would not have been the case. Deliberative assemblies, even those composed to a great extent of highly educated men, soon tire of that kind of a speaker. But



Latin and English quotations, and the display of many kinds of knowledge, of which the average Congressman was ignorant, and really had no great need, did not give a member of the House a distaste for Randolph's oratory because these things he felt instinctively were but a part of that almost preternatural facility with which Randolph could for hours at a time, with as much ease as water runs out of a cup, or the wind moves along its trackless pathway, give utterance to a host of fresh pictorial thoughts, expressed with too much consummate readiness and harmony to leave the slightest doubt behind them as to the ability of the speaker to carry, without difficulty, the whole weight of his burden, however various. Randolph's learning, like all the other elements which entered into his liquid speech, was held in infusion too completely to have a foreign flavor. (*a*) The truth is that his literary accomplishments were, as they should have been, a merely subsidiary feature of his character as an orator and a statesman; and in this position they were kept, aside from still more important features of that character, by his extraordinary prominence as a wealthy land- and slave-holder, his high social station, his familiarity with the world of action, as well as of books, and the extent to which his mind was saturated with reflections and illustrations drawn from the great living volume of nature in Virginia. To few men in the public life of England or of our own country have instructive apothegms or wise maxims, proverbs, and sayings derived from the collective wisdom of humanity, expressing itself on the street and in the farmhouse, been more serviceable in the propagation of their ideas than they were to Randolph. They were but succinct formulæ, for rules of conduct worked out by his own practical intelligence, which rarely lost contact with actuality.

One of the most attractive traits of his oratory was the promptitude with which he seized upon some rural fact or

natural phenomenon for the purpose of giving point to some conception or argument of his. An example of this on the hustings is mentioned by the Rev. Wm. S. Lacy in his *Early Recollections of John Randolph*.

“He was at the time alluded to speaking with calmness and earnestness too, deeply absorbed in his subject and, from the quiet and fixed attention of the people, they were deeply interested also. He was in the act of stating that, if certain things were done, ‘such an event would follow as inevitably’—and casting up his eye, as if to seize upon some appropriate illustration, a leaf from the tree over him came twirling down before his face, and, following it with his finger in its fall to the ground, he added—‘as the power of gravitation.’ If he had studied a month for an illustration, to suit his purpose precisely, he could not have selected one more appropriate. It seemed to strike everyone with an agreeable surprise. This, however, is only one out of scores of similar instances.”<sup>1</sup> (a)

Another story of the same sort is found in a letter from Timothy Pickering to Rufus King: “John Randolph,” he says, “observing my townsman, Crowninshield, quite fierce for Gregg’s Resolution, said to one of my friends in the House that ‘he (Crowninshield) was like a hog swimming over a river—who would cut his own throat.’”<sup>2</sup>

On another occasion, discussing the regular army, he said: “If ever we are to have a respectable regular force, we must, to use a phrase common in our new settled country, ‘begin again from the stump.’”<sup>3</sup> In the economy of such a country as Southside Virginia stumps were a standing offense to proper tilth, and, left in the beds of new-made roads, sometimes spiced travel with no little risk; so it is natural that Randolph should have returned to them a second time in debate. The road from the Crimea to Byzantium had proved a “stumpy” one for

<sup>1</sup> *Union Seminary Mag.*, v. 5 (1893-94), p. 1-10.

<sup>2</sup> Feb. 13, 1806, *Life of Rufus King*, ed., by Chas. R. King, v. 4, 494.

<sup>3</sup> *A. of C.*, 1809-10, v. 1, 62.

Russia, he said.<sup>1</sup> On another occasion, illustrating the sense of impunity, he exclaimed:

“If you want mischievous stock on your farm or plantation, you must keep bad fences; if you would have roguish hogs, cows and horses, keep bad fences. Those, who would not otherwise have ventured to jump over a straw, will in that way soon learn to jump, as we say in the Southern Country, over ten rails and a rider.”<sup>2</sup>

The embargo without a time limitation was a “horse medicine.”<sup>3</sup> Who that ever witnessed the hit-or-miss, kill-or-cure, methods of a rural veterinarian can be at any loss to understand just what Randolph meant? The amazing thing is that speeches so faultless in syntax and expression, and so crowded with glistening similes and metaphors and pointed, and, at times, poetical, phrases, should have been thrown off by him wholly without verbal preparation. In the course of a debate in the House, he spoke of himself as accustomed to meditate much on his opinions, and not at all on the language that conveyed them;<sup>4</sup> and, in another debate, he declared that he had never been able to make what was called “a regular speech.” (a) Everything appeared to undergo a kind of “sea-change” in his mind; passing into it in some prosaic, familiar form, and issuing from it in some vivid and highly original one. “That simple rule,” he once declared, in regard to a parliamentary rule relating to the motion to reconsider, “might satisfy the most lynx-eyed duenna anxious to restrain the wanton excursions of debate.”<sup>5</sup>

Or take this example: “But how cruel it is when the cup of fruition is, as it were, at the lips of the panting expectant for this House, for the Committee of Claims—that Rhada-

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1823-24, v. 1, 1183.

<sup>3</sup> *A. of C.*, 1809-10, v. 1, 105.

<sup>5</sup> *A. of C.*, 1815-16, v. 1, 698.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1815-16, v. 1, 945.

<sup>4</sup> *A. of C.*, 1821-22, v. 1, 943.

manthan Committee—to dash it from the parched lips of these thirsty patriots!”<sup>1</sup>

Or take this example:

“It was as much as old Nestor, with trusty Sthenelus by his side, and all the train could do to arrest those fiery hot-headed steeds who were hurrying the state carriage down the precipice of French alliance.”<sup>2</sup>

And when was any other Congressman ever known to frame such a sentence as this:

“Miserable indeed would be the condition of oppressed humanity, if the sweet pliability of man’s spirit could not now and then turn its gaze from the sombre events of life and relax into a smile.”<sup>3</sup>

The simplest, the most uninspiring, subject had a way of picturing itself in boldly figurative language when heated by his imagination: “The moment this bill becomes a law,” he announced on one occasion, “you will hear the flap of the ominous wings of the Treasury pouncing upon your table with projects of land tax, excise, hearth tax, window tax.”<sup>4</sup>

However diffuse and vagrant his discourse might be as a whole, his individual sentences were usually concise and sententious to an eminent degree, as when he said: “You may cover whole skins of parchment with limitations but power alone can limit power.”<sup>5</sup>

“The vermin of contract,” “the besom of innovation,” “Backstairs influence,” “the pages of the water-closet,” are but some of the derisive expressions which clung like burrs to the memory of his contemporaries. Diplomats he defined as “privileged spies.”

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1816–17, v. 2, 388.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1809–1810, v. 1, 150.

<sup>3</sup> *A. of C.*, 1807–08, v. 2, 2048.

<sup>4</sup> *A. of C.*, 1811–12, v. 1, 775.

<sup>5</sup> *A. of C.*, 1811–12, v. 1, 744.

When was the truth, of which we have almost lost sight in this day of the initiative and referendum, more pointedly stated than by Randolph?

"Every feature of our Governments, both State and Federal, prove that the people were sensible of the necessity of restraining as well the headlong impetuosity of the multitude as the inordinate ambition of the few. Where such restraint is not imposed there is no genuine liberty."<sup>1</sup>

And when was the difference between the scope of real executive oversight on a large scale and that of narrow routine training brought out more distinctly than it was in these words directed against Crowninshield: (*a*)

"There were two sorts of experience—that of an enlarged, liberal, reflecting mind, possessing powers of high discrimination, capable of comparing effects in all their various relations to each other, and a little petty, personal experience, extending to a few matters of insignificant detail. Because a man had served on board a merchant vessel, whether in the fore-castle or the cabin, did that entitle him to talk magisterially on systems of naval defense? Or because he could box the compass was he better calculated for the head of an admiralty than John Lord Spencer, who was probably destitute of that elegant accomplishment, but who, because he was a statesman and not because he was an able-bodied seaman, had conducted the naval affairs of a country with a success and glory that might be equalled but never could be surpassed."<sup>2</sup>

Nor could political philosophy ever hope to be attired in a more winning dress than it is in these words used by Randolph in the Virginia Convention of 1829–30 on the proposition to discard property as a principle to be taken into account in fixing upon the proper basis for the suffrage:

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1807–08, v. 1, 941.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1807–08, v. 1, 1169.

“It is the first time in my life that I ever heard of a government which was to divorce property from power, yet this is seriously and soberly proposed to us. Sir, I know it is practicable, but it can be done only by a violent divulsion as in France—but the moment you have separated the two that very moment property will go in search of power and power in search of property. ‘Male and female created he them,’ and the two sexes do not more certainly, nor by a more unerring law, gravitate to each other than power and property.”<sup>1</sup>(a)

The truth of what we have so far said about Randolph as an orator is generally allowed; but it is often asserted that his speeches were at times unduly prolix and digressive and therefore deficient in the best quality of a good speech; that is, relevancy to the point at issue; and not infrequently these criticisms, as we have seen, assume the form of a flat asseveration that Randolph’s mind was lacking in logical power.

In weighing the force of these views, a broad distinction must be taken between Randolph in the earlier stages of his political career and Randolph in its later. At no time in his life were his speeches cast in the ordinary mould of formal, standard logic; for, at no time in his life, it is believed, did he rely upon anything but the *vivida vis* of his own quick, fertile mind for the garb of his spoken words. Even in his earlier speeches, there is often a lack in the chain of his thoughts of that closely linked concatenation which is found even in the efforts of commonplace but more conventional speakers. In his finest speeches, such as those on Gregg’s Resolution, there are *lacunæ*, missing stitches, here and there, and then passion, as in his Yazoo speeches, is often so perfectly fused with argument that argument appears to lose, to no little extent, its own severe, sharply defined character.(b) But to assert that, even when Randolph’s mind was not in a shattered condition, his speeches gave no evidence of real logical power,

<sup>1</sup> *Debates*, 319.

is to disregard altogether the reports of his speeches in the records of Congress. These reports will show that, at times, he not only reasoned consecutively and most cogently but, at times, most ingeniously and subtly. It was an observation of Calhoun, one of the acutest of men, that it was an error to suppose that Randolph was deficient in reasoning capacity. Upon a single point, he said, Randolph reasoned admirably; it was only when he came to deal with a combination of points that his ratiocination fell short<sup>1</sup>; and there is some truth in this judgment; for Randolph was endowed with what has been happily called "a single-track mind." John Wickham also had something to say on the subject:

"If the enemies of Mr. Randolph mean to say that he can not, or at least *does* not, build up an argument, brick by brick, as an architect puts up a house, they are probably correct. But as the object of all argument is to carry a point, and, as he must be considered the ablest reasoner who makes the most decided impression, he must be a very rash man who should refuse to accord to Mr. Randolph reasoning powers of a very high order."<sup>2</sup>

Be this as it may, there was never a time in Randolph's life, whether before his intellect became gravely susceptible to derangement, or afterwards, when he did not possess, to a remarkable degree, the faculty of reasoning soundly by flashes of intuition; of reaching the correct conclusion by a leap instead of by a step-ladder. Few men, too, have equalled him in the faculty of condensing laborious processes of argumentation into a pithy statement or a felicitous figure of speech. On this subject, there are some weighty sentences in *The Party Leaders* of Joseph G. Baldwin, who lived near enough to Randolph's

<sup>1</sup> "Sketches of the Va. Convention of 1829-30," by Hugh R. Pleasants, *So. Lit. Mess.*, v. 17, 302.

<sup>2</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

time to make him little less than an original authority on the subject of Randolph:

“But most largely developed of all his faculties, probably, was his quick, clear and deep comprehension. His finely-toned and penetrative intellect possessed an acumen, a perspicuity which was as quick and vivid as lightning. His conclusions did not wait upon long and labored inductions; his mind, as by an instinctive insight, darted at once upon the core of the subject, and sprang with an electric leap upon the conclusion. He started where most reasoners end. It is a mistake to suppose that he was deficient in argumentative power. He was as fertile of argumentation as most speakers; he was only deficient in argumentative forms. His statements were so clear, so simplified, and so vivid that they saved him much of the necessity of laborious processes of ratiocination. Much that looked like declamation was only illustration or another form of argument.”<sup>1</sup>

But, unquestionably, Randolph's latter day speeches, even before his mental powers became permanently impaired, were inferior in point of logical coherency to his earlier ones. Brilliant and far-sighted as was his leading speech on the tariff in 1824, in it can yet be observed indications of the mental relaxation which, at times, rendered his subsequent speeches so diffuse and rambling. During his Senatorial career, his growing tendency towards feverish loquacity and aimless wanderings, aggravated by an indubitable access of positive mental infirmity, reached its extreme limit, so far as Congress was concerned; and, notwithstanding the gleams of wit, wisdom, and instructive knowledge, by which even his longest and most multifarious discourses in the Senate were relieved, and the savage force, with which they sank their teeth at times, into the flank of the Adams administration, his speeches during his Senatorial career were serious impediments to the orderly and dispatchful transaction of the public busi-

<sup>1</sup> P. 268.



ness, and even had a decided effect in defeating his reelection to the Senate. It will not do, however, to attach too much importance to the fact that Randolph's speeches in Congress were not always pertinent to the pending subject of debate. He often used the text furnished by it merely as a hook on which to hang his convictions about current political issues. As a speech on Retrenchment and Reform, his speech on that subject in the House is a very irrelevant one, but, as an eulogy of Andrew Jackson, and an attack on John Quincy Adams, it is a masterpiece. Singular to say, to anyone, who is not familiar with the peculiar manner in which the recurrences of Randolph's *dementia* manifested themselves, his speeches in the Virginia Convention of 1829-30 were not only brief but conspicuously terse and pointed. They too are marked by little or no studied reasoning; indeed by little reasoning of any kind, but it must be borne in mind that his policy in the Convention was not to open up or discuss any question new or old, but simply to insist doggedly and scornfully upon the strength of Sir Robert Walpole's maxim, *quieta non movere*, that the existing constitution of Virginia should undergo no substantial change. After the adjournment of the Convention, Randolph never spoke in any deliberative body again; and it will not do to test the merits of his subsequent speeches on the hustings by the standards prescribed by parliamentary oratory. In the last stages of his political activity, even when he was in a mental state to be taken seriously at all, he was not merely an orator; he was a theatrical show, a circus as well. Thousands of people thronged to hear him on court day, not so much to be instructed as to be startled and entertained, and the avidity, with which they devoured everything that he said, reacted unfavorably upon his oratorical gifts, already deeply affected by his general loss of mental force and balance. He became arrogant, overbearing, garrulous, extravagant, abusive, and resolved still to sit,

even if he no longer had the strength to stand, before the footlights. Finally, we see Randolph at Buckingham Court House, as Moseley described him—a decrepit, morose, crack-brained old man, but little removed from the stage of human existence when we are told by Jacques that we are “sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything,” or, as he described himself, “a poor, half-crazy, moon-struck South-sider.”<sup>1</sup> But, perhaps, we have engaged in an unprofitable task in subjecting Randolph as an orator to ordinary principles of criticism at all. His charm as a speaker consisted largely in the fact that his elocution and matter were both so peculiarly original as to render him absolutely unique. There is no other orator with whom we can compare him. He is the only member of his species, and to him might be applied what the New England countryman said of that other brilliant creature, Rufus Choate. Contrasting Choate with Webster, he said: “Webster is like everybody else, except that there is more of him; but whoever saw anybody like Rufus Choate?”

<sup>1</sup> Letter to J. R. Bryan and wife, Aug. 1, 1830, Bryan MSS.

## CHAPTER VIII

### **Randolph as a Statesman**

Randolph's position as an orator is assured, but his position as a statesman is by no means so certain. Indeed, if he is judged by present standards of American statesmanship, it is difficult for anyone except a student of history to think of him as a statesman at all; so completely lost beyond all possibility of redemption are most of the causes for which he strove. There was nothing continental; nothing truly national, about him. It will not do to apply to him as a statesman our current tests—an open-minded construction of the Federal Constitution; devotion to the ideal of national unity; faith in our expanding population, wealth and power; sensibility to the military and naval needs, developed by the mutual propinquity of all parts of the earth, brought about by the steamship, the steam-car, and the aeroplane; the awakening sense of international community, which is slowly leading to the sober fulfillment of Tennyson's radiant dream of the Parliament of Man and the Federation of the World, and freedom from all the sectional and class prepossessions and prejudices which do so much to cramp and blur the outlook which should belong to the true statesman. Tried by these tests, Randolph is not entitled to the place which has been given him in the series of lives, published by Houghton, Mifflin Co., under the title of *American Statesmen*.

When construing the powers of the general government

under the Federal Constitution, he approached that instrument in a spirit as nice and exacting as that of Shylock when construing the words of his bond: " 'Tis not so nominated in the bond," was as far as he could be induced to go. Members of the House of Representatives, as we have seen, he deemed representatives of the States and not of the nation. He denied the power of the Federal Government to establish a national bank, or national highways, or to enact an impost measure with any element of protection in it. He was so jealous of any attempt on its part to assert authority over the waters of the Potomac River that even Jefferson was compelled to dismiss his fine-spun refinements as "metaphysical." The act organizing a provisional government for the colony of Virginia in 1652 concluded: "God save the commonwealth of England and this country of Virginia!"<sup>1</sup> Transpose the members of this sentence and it not inaptly voices Randolph's political allegiance. The State of Virginia, then England, and then what he called, "the good old thirteen United States,"<sup>2</sup> exclusive of Virginia, was perhaps the order in which his local attachments ranged themselves. (a) Except so far as the Southern States, other than Virginia, were bound to Virginia by similar institutions and pursuits, he seems to have cared as little about them as he did about the Middle or Eastern States. In many respects, his social characteristics and tastes were better suited to England than to the crudity of our early national existence. To him it was the maternal and a riper Virginia. Indeed, near the close of his life, his disaffection even with his native commonwealth was so strong that Dr. Ethelbert Algernon Coleman, after visiting him at Roanoke, made this entry in his unpublished diary, on Oct. 20, 1832: "From his continual abuse of this country and its levelling principles, and from the exalted terms, in

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. of Va.*, by Chas. Campbell, 223.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1815-16, 534.

which he speaks of England and its society and institutions, one would certainly conclude him to be a tory." These, however, were but the outgivings of a soul so sick from both physical and mental causes as to be incapable any longer of finding tranquillity and contentment anywhere. It is true that even in healthier moments Randolph often decried Virginia, but, in this respect, he resembles Dr. Johnson, who disparaged Goldsmith himself but would not allow anyone else to do so. The intense sympathy which he usually manifested with the Irish in their desire for a larger measure of political well-being, the fond veneration which he entertained for the character of Washington, the pride which he took in our Revolutionary achievements, the satisfaction which he derived from the popular as well as the aristocratic side of the old Virginia civil polity, show that, after all, Virginia was more congenial with his predilections than England, even though he did exclaim at times that there never had and never would be such a country as England, or such a boot-and-shoemaker as Hoby, of London, or insisted that he was a member of the Established Church of England. For nothing can be better avouched than his constant, fervid, and impassioned affection for Virginia. "When I speak of my country," he wrote to Key on Sept. 7, 1818, "I mean the Commonwealth of Virginia."<sup>1</sup>

"I confess," he said, when the Apportionment Bill of 1822 brought out the fact that Virginia was slipping back in the scale of population, "that I have (and I am not at all ashamed to own it) an hereditary attachment to the State which gave me birth. I shall act upon it as long as I act on this floor or anywhere else; I shall feel it when I am no longer capable of action anywhere, but I beg gentlemen to bear in mind that, if we feel the throes and agonies, which gentlemen seem to impute to us at the recollection of our departing power, why, Sir, there *is* something in fallen greatness, though it be in the

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 103.

person of a despot; something, to enlist the passions and feelings of men even against their reason. Bonaparte himself has had those who sympathized with him. But, if such be our condition, if we really are so extremely sensitive on this subject, do not gentlemen recollect the application of another received maxim in relation to sudden—I will not say *upstart*—elevation—that some who are once set on horseback know not and care not which way they shall ride. . . .

“I have found the gentleman from New York always agreeable and polite in his deportment; I feel for him every sort of deference, but I beg him to recollect an old motto that always occurs to me at the approach of everything in the shape of an attack upon my country. It is: *Nemo me impune lacessit.*”<sup>1</sup>

In another debate on the same subject, he even declared that he had rather take the chance of war with the Holy Alliance of Europe than lose one representative on the floor of the House from Virginia.<sup>2</sup> On another occasion he said:

“Whatever is to be the fate of this bill, whether this splendid project [surveys for roads and canals] shall or shall not go into operation now or be reserved for the new reign, the approach of which is hailed with so much pleasure, my place must be either in the obscurity of private life or in the thankless and profitless employment of attempting to uphold the rights of the States and of the people so long as I can stand—more especially the rights of my native State, the land of my sires, which, although I be among the least worthy or least favored of her sons, and, although she may allot to me a stepson’s portion, I will uphold so long as I live.”<sup>3</sup>

Despite the appellation of “The Hannibal of the West” which he gave to George Rogers Clark, and the expedition of the two Virginians, William Clark and Meriwether Lewis, which has been recently commemorated by a singu-

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1821-22, v. 1, 903.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, *Id.*, v. 1, 946.

<sup>3</sup> *A. of C.*, 1823-24, v. 1, 1310.

larly beautiful monument at Charlottesville, Randolph regarded with no little distrust our westward expansion.

"When I hear," he said in the debate on the Apportionment Bill of 1822, "of settlements at the Council Bluffs, and of bills for taking possession of the mouth of the Columbia River, I turn not a deaf ear but an ear of a different sort to the sad vaticinations of what is to happen in the length of time, believing, as I do, that no Government, extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, can be fit to govern me or those whom I represent. There is death in the pot, compound it how you will. No such government can exist because it must want the common feeling and common interest with the governed which is indispensable to its existence."<sup>1</sup>

This pinched view of our national destiny was not due to a lack of kindling imagination, for with that faculty he was richly endowed; but to the fear of the menace to the political supremacy of Virginia and what it guarded which lurked in every westward extension of our national empire. This comes out very clearly in what he prophetically said on another occasion, when he was referring to the act by which the Northwest Territory was ceded by Virginia to the Union.

"But, by that act, the great river Ohio, in itself a natural limit—not a line drawn by your surveyors who at the time did not dare to go over and chop with a tomahawk a line in the vast forests, then imaginary states—that natural limit is made (I speak in the spirit of foresight) the permanent and unfading line of future division, if not in the Government, in the councils, of the Country."<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, to such a pitch was his alarm aroused by what was taking place in the West, that he was ready to regret one of the most creditable episodes in his entire career; that is, the part he took in the acquisition of Louisiana.

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1821-22, v. 1, 820.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1821-22, v. 1, 942.

"I for one," he exclaimed in the same speech, "although forewarned, was not forearmed. If I had been, I have no hesitation in declaring that I would have said to the imperial Dejanira of modern times—take back your fatal present! I would have staked the free navigation of the Mississippi on the sword, and we must have gained it."<sup>1</sup>

Not only did Randolph pride himself upon not having voted for but one amendment to the Federal Constitution, but he declared that he had never voted in favor of the admission of any state into the Union.<sup>2</sup> "The children of the second marriage," he once declared, "should not sweep away the whole estate."<sup>3</sup>

How hostile he was to most measures, looking to our national defence, we have already seen. He began his political career by terming our regular soldiery "rag-a-muffins," and from that time to the end of his political career, it was for him an object of fierce vituperation. At one time, he seems to have recognized the fact that the maintenance of a small regular army for such purposes as the protection of New Orleans, the chastisement of the Indians, or the repulse of Canadian incursions was necessary<sup>4</sup>; but, beyond these limited purposes, the professional soldier was *anathema maranatha* to him. In fact, he once said that there was a time, and he wished he might live to see it again, when the legislators of the country outnumbered the rank and file of the army and the officers to boot.<sup>5</sup> Once, alluding to the professional soldier, he even poured out his scorn in words like these: "I do say that I never see one of those useless drones in livery crawling on the face of the earth that my gorge does not rise—that I do not feel sick. I see no reason why we should not maintain sturdy beggars in rags as well as beggars of another de-

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1821-22, v. 1, 943.

<sup>2</sup> *Reg. of Debates*, 1825-26, v. 2, Part 1, 354.

<sup>3</sup> *A. of C.*, 1816-17, v. 2, 467.

<sup>4</sup> *A. of C.*, 1811-12, v. 1, 422.

<sup>5</sup> *A. of C.*, 1821-22, v. 1, 819.



scription in tinsel."<sup>1</sup> His support of the navy, to say the least, was very illiberal.<sup>2</sup> It is a gratification, however, to realize that, in course of time, his eyes were opened to the vital importance of a strong fleet to our safety. "Not that he denied," he is reported as saying in the debate on Commercial Intercourse in 1817, "that, if this country was to be defended against a great maritime power, it must be by a fleet; on that point he had not the slightest doubt."<sup>3</sup> But again we must remind the reader that, in his opposition to a considerable army and navy, Randolph was probably the mouthpiece of a vast majority of his fellow-countrymen. His power to express his feelings with declamatory energy was simply superior to theirs. Nor should it be forgotten that Randolph worked out for himself what he conceived to be a good alternative system of national defence for the United States. In season and out of season, he insisted that every able-bodied man in the land should be armed, and it was a part of his defensive scheme also that our coasts should be defended by mobile batteries. In one of his earlier speeches, he said:

"He wished to see the public treasure employed in putting arms into the hands of all who were capable of bearing them, and in providing heavy artillery; not in the erection of a naval force which, whether great or small, unless it too could retreat beyond the mountains, must fall into the hands of the enemy. If they wanted a force that should combine strength with simplicity, ready at all times for the public protection, they had such a force amply in their power."<sup>4</sup>

Properly enlarged and extended, Randolph's idea of arming the entire militia of the country was eminently sound, and could readily have been developed into the

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1809-10, v. 2, 1980.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1808-09, v. 3, 1348; 1809-10, v. 2, 1612; 1809-10, v. 2, 1994; 1809-10, v. 2, 2015; 1807-08, v. 1, 829.

<sup>3</sup> *A. of C.*, 1816-17, v. 2, 830.

<sup>4</sup> *A. of C.*, 1807-08, v. 1, 1169.

system of universal military training which, it is now generally conceded, is the true military ideal for our country; and, if his idea of flying coast-batteries is no longer practicable, perhaps it is only because it has been rendered obsolete by the tremendous power and range of modern naval ordnance, which he could not well anticipate. Nor can any of the convictions held by Randolph in regard to the national defence be set down to a lack of intrepidity or to mere besotted pacifism, such as was so common in the United States on the eve of the recent World War. His heart was a brave one, and never was there a head in which less inane enthusiasm was lodged.

(a) As his stand with regard to Spanish encroachments at the time of his break with the Jefferson administration demonstrated, he was quick enough to fly at any cock that trespassed upon our own barn-yard. His theory simply was that the policy of non-entanglement with European discord had come down to us as a wise tradition of policy; that, happily for us, the Atlantic interposed a wide and impassable fosse between us and the Old World; and that, if we would only safe-guard our coasts with a well-armed citizenry and proper trains of artillery, there would be no occasion for our incurring the burden and peril of great military and naval armaments. Europe was then really 3,000 miles away from us, and men and munitions of war could be transported to our shores only in squads and dribblets. But, when the *Leopard* made the *Chesapeake* the subject of its wanton outrage, Randolph, as we have seen, flamed up into burning resentment. He was for vindicating the violated honor of the country *instantly*, and, afterwards reverting to the incident, he said: "We spoke of war if reparation were denied, and I do trust in God that Quebec would have been in ashes if Great Britain had avowed the attack."<sup>1</sup> "It," he said, referring to the language of Talleyrand, in opposing our boundary claims

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1807-8, v. 2, 2034.

in regard to Florida, "will ring in my ears with that of Mr. Champagny, and with the thunder of the guns of the *Leopard*, as long as I live."<sup>1</sup>

A strong spirit of international sympathy could hardly have been expected of Randolph, because it is only since his day that such a thing as a real international consciousness can be said to have come into being. It was natural that he should have felt in his time, as the wise statesmen who preceded him had felt, that, the less we allowed the concerns of our national life to become interlaced with those of the jarring nations of Europe, the better. Randolph's powers of observation and reflection were, of course, hobbled by many more or less imperious predilections and prejudices. He was a member of the ancient landed aristocracy of Virginia, and he found it difficult in many respects to rid himself of its social bias and peculiar conceptions. Fee tails, primogeniture, and the freehold suffrage were all hallowed by a certain sort of sanctity in his eyes, and shut off from them that larger vision of universal suffrage, universally educated, which is the ideal of our own time; like the North Pole before Peary, often despaired of but never renounced. Randolph was also strongly swayed by sectional influences, but not to such an extent as to prevent him from forming friendly personal connections with more than one Northern member of Congress. He found the same difficulty in understanding the New England character that the New Englander found in understanding the Virginian character, and no greater, so far as we can see; forming our opinion from hasty judgments about "Yankees," which we find here and there, in his letters, and the reservations which such men as Josiah Quincy and Elijah H. Mills, of Massachusetts, preserved in their friendly social intercourse with him. (a) He told Josiah Quincy on one occasion that he never intended to set his foot on the farther bank of the

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1807-08, v. 2, 2031.

Hudson, but that if he did, Quincy's house was the first that he would enter. '(b)

"I was born in allegiance to George III.; the Bishop of London (Terrick) was my diocesan," he once wrote to Key. "My ancestors threw off the oppressive yoke of the mother country, but they never made me subject to *New* England in matters spiritual or temporal; neither do I mean to become so voluntarily."<sup>2</sup>

Randolph's failure to get along with the Northern Democrats in the House during the Jefferson administration, was largely responsible for his fall from leadership; and it was only through the diplomatic brokerage of Van Buren, "rowing to his object with muffled oars," that he was brought into harmony with them again.

But, as a statesman, Randolph is to be judged by no such latter-day tests. He was a public man of the early 19th, and not of the 20th, century; and there are statesmen of lost as well as of won causes. If, for no other reason, his position as a statesman is secure, first, because he was the "unusual phenomenon" of the House (to use a term borrowed from John Adams),<sup>3</sup> during the brief dewy era of frugality, retrenchment, and reform, and new-born Republican principles which made Jefferson as nearly an universally popular Messiah as the diversities of human convictions and sympathies will ever permit any man to be; secondly, because his searching common sense, eloquence and incorruptible integrity, even in opposition, scotched many an ill-digested and pernicious measure, and thirdly, because he fully deserved the tribute paid to him by the resolutions, adopted at Prince Edward Court House a few weeks after his death, which ran in these words: "Resolved that in his death, we deplore the loss of the most intelligent,

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 267.

<sup>2</sup> Sept. 25, 1818, Garland, v. 2, 103.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Rush, June 22, 1806, *Old Family Letters*, 100.

the most consistent, and the most intrepid, advocate of the Rights and Sovereignty of the States."<sup>1</sup>

During the period when the sarcastic eloquence of Randolph reigned pre-eminent over the deliberations of the Federal Representatives (to borrow again from John Adams)<sup>2</sup> he performed with conspicuous success all the tasks imposed upon him as a statesman in the committee room and in the conference chamber of the President. Sawyer tells us that he was the confidential friend of Jefferson from 1801 until his breach with him in 1806; and, during this time, conducted himself as the privileged and almost exclusive champion of executive policy on the floor of the House.<sup>3</sup> By Benton we are told that, whenever Randolph arrived in Washington, at the beginning of a session of Congress, he found awaiting him an invitation from Jefferson to dine with him at the White House the next day; so that they could fully discuss together the business of the session. Many years after this period, Randolph said on the floor of the House that, "when he was intimate with the members of the Cabinet, he had been let into their secrets, and, perhaps, too deeply into them."<sup>4</sup> (a) George Tucker states that, as Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, Randolph was "overbearing and dictatorial with his associates—self-willed and impracticable with the Executive."<sup>5</sup> The first of these charges, so far as we are aware, is supported by no evidence. We have already seen how eager Randolph's colleagues on the Committee of Ways and Means were in 1806 to restore him to its Chairmanship. In one of his letters to Jefferson, too, at any rate, he manifested, as the reader has already learned, a keen desire to disabuse the mind of Jefferson of the possible impression that he had meant a reproach to him. Nor, so far as we are aware, is

<sup>1</sup> Clerk's Office, Cir. Ct., Prince Edw. Ct. House, Va.

<sup>2</sup> *Works*, v. 1, 203.

<sup>4</sup> *A. of C.*, 1815-16, v. 1, 727,

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 24 & 25.

<sup>5</sup> *Life of Jefferson*, v. 2. 206.

there any evidence to support the charge made against Randolph by Tucker that he did not have the business habits, or knowledge of details, or powers of expounding what was intricate or obscure, which his position in the House sometimes required.<sup>1</sup> The *Annals of Congress* show that he was very industrious and systematic in the discharge of his duties, as Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, or as chairman or member of other committees, on which he served during the administration of Jefferson. On one occasion, Samuel Smith, who had been a business man of long experience and high standing, before he became a member of the House, expressed his astonishment at the readiness with which Randolph, as Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, explained an obscure and intricate matter.<sup>2</sup> Sawyer also speaks of Randolph's promptitude, as Chairman of that Committee, in making all the necessary explanations on all points on which objections were raised from any quarter of the House. In 1819, Randolph made unchallenged the statement that, during the greater part of the administration of Thomas Jefferson, the expenditures of the Government had been generally within the appropriations, and that no sum appropriated to one object had ever been diverted to another.<sup>3</sup> But what could so conclusively evince the merits of Randolph, as the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, as the marked reluctance with which, as Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin saw the man, who had been his right arm in protecting the revenues of the country, displaced by a man who shortly afterwards himself felt constrained to pay a compliment to the transparent clearness with which Randolph always presented any subject to which he might address himself on the floor of the House?<sup>4</sup> (a) Nor will the idea that Randolph's political career was wholly

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Jefferson*, v. 2, 207.

<sup>3</sup> *A. of C.*, 1819-20, v. 1, 817.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1802-03, 631.

<sup>4</sup> *A. of C.*, 1808-9, v. 3, 716.

devoid of constructive suggestions bear examination. His recommendation, while he was Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, of the House, that a public printer be appointed to do the printing work of the Government proved a beneficent reform when carried into effect. To Randolph also Sawyer accredits "the substitution under the appropriate heads of specific, instead of general and indefinite, appropriations."<sup>1</sup> He also secured the enactment of a standing appropriation of \$200,000 for arming the militia.<sup>2</sup>

Another notable reform suggested by him was the abolition of flogging in the army. This subject is mentioned in one of his letters to Andrew Jackson, in which he endeavored to enlist the sympathy of Jackson in favor of the abolition of the lash in the navy as well.

"I will take leave," Randolph said, "to call your attention to another subject. I mean our naval discipline. At my instance, the punishment of the lash was abolished in the army; and, if I were in Congress, I should feel myself constrained to bring forward a similar motion in regard to the navy. I know that common sailors are a very different class of men from our militiamen, and will bear what the spirit of these last cannot brook; but the scenes, which I witnessed on board the *Concord*, were so revolting that I made up my mind never to take passage again on board of a vessel of war—at least with a newly-shipped crew. The men were raw; some of them landsmen; most of them fishermen (not whalemens—they are the best of seamen), utterly ignorant of the rigging or management of a square-rigged vessel. The midshipmen had to show them the various ropes, etc., the very names of which they were ignorant of, and knew not where to look for them; the Lieutenants were worn down, performing not their own proper duties only, but those of the Midshipmen also, who in turn were discharging the duties of all able-bodied seamen. Punishment by putting in irons, and by the colt, was continu-

<sup>1</sup> P. 44.<sup>2</sup> P. 44.



ally going on. I do not know whether the cat was used or not, as I always retreated to my stateroom to avoid the odious spectacle which surprised and shocked my negro slaves. In seven years, the same quantity of punishment could not be distributed among the same number of slaves as was inflicted in a voyage of three weeks from Hampton Roads to Portsmouth. What was done afterwards, I know not, having been confined to my room and chiefly to my bed during the voyage from England to Cronstadt."<sup>1</sup>

The Federal Sub-Treasury idea has been said to have been conceived by Wm. Fitzhugh Gordon, of Virginia, when a member of Congress from Virginia, during the session of 1834-5,<sup>2</sup> but the idea would seem to have been first formed by Randolph, though to Gordon is unquestionably due the credit of first making it a matter of practical moment. In a letter to Thomas H. Benton, dated Dec. 12, 1829, Randolph said:

"You will search in vain 'Congressional History' for the project mentioned by Hall, to whom I spoke of it more than once. It was a creature of my own device—shown only to two friends, one of whom is long since dead, but never brought forward in public.

"Soon after Mr. Jefferson's accession, looking forward to the termination of the United States Bank, and being much opposed to that or any similar institution, I turned my thoughts to the subject, and devised a plan, which, as I conceived, would supply all the duties and offices of the United States Bank, so far as Government was concerned. It is obvious that the discounting of private paper has no connection with the transfer of public monies, or a sound paper currency. My plan was to make the great custom-houses branches of our great national bank of deposit—a sort of loan office, if you will. Upon the deposits and monies, received for duties, Treasury notes, receivable in all taxes, etc. of the United States to issue. The

<sup>1</sup> Oct. 24, 1831, Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> *Wm. F. Gordon*, by Gordon, 226, 229.



details you can easily conceive. The whole under the Secretary of the Treasury and other great officers of the State. At the time I speak of, the land offices were not in receipt of sufficient sums to make their depositories similar to the great custom houses, but, whenever large dues to government were payable, the plan would be extended. This would give one description of paper, bottomed upon substantial capital, and, whensoever Government might stand in need of a few millions, instead of borrowing their own money from a knot of brokers on the credit of said brokers, it might, under proper restrictions, issue its own paper in anticipation of future revenues or taxes to be laid; such notes to be cancelled within a given time."<sup>1</sup>(a)

If Randolph did not originate or sponsor more constructive ideas than he did, it should be remembered that it was partly, at any rate, because, for far the greater part of his career, he sustained a relation of detachment from the party agencies by which such ideas are usually originated and carried into execution.

The principles, upon which the first administration of Jefferson was conducted, are set forth by Randolph in his speech in the House on Jan. 13, 1813.

"Is it necessary for me at this time of day," he said, "to make a declaration of the principles of the Republican party? Is it possible that such a declaration could be deemed orthodox when proceeding from lips so unholy as those of an excommunicant from that church? It is not necessary. These principles are on record; they are engraved upon it indelibly by the press and will live as long as the art of printing is suffered to exist. It is not for any man at this day to undertake to change them; it is not for any man, who then professed them, by any guise or circumlocution to conceal apostacy from them; for they are there—there in the book. What are they? They have been delivered to you by my honorable colleague. What are they? Love of peace, hatred of offensive war, jealousy of the State Governments towards the General Government and of

<sup>1</sup> *Jackson Papers*, v. 74, Libr. Cong.

the influence of the Executive Government over the co-ordinate branches of that Government; a dread of standing armies; a loathing of public debt, taxes and excises; tenderness for the liberty of the citizen; jealousy, Argus-eyed jealousy of the patronage of the President."<sup>1</sup>

"This Masked Monarchy—for such our Government is," was one of his utterances and it well summed up his general attitude towards the Federal authority.<sup>2</sup>

To all the Republican principles to which Randolph pledged his early faith, he remained unswervingly faithful during his entire political life, first of all, because he earnestly believed in them, and had practised them when he was the leader of the House; and secondly, because, after he ceased to be the leader of the House, he was never again cogently required by circumstances to reconcile political abstractions with the despotic exigencies of political administration.

In or out of office, however, Randolph, as a public man, was governed by motives as pure and as disinterested as any to which an American statesman has ever responded. Morse, one of the last biographers of Jefferson, reaches the conclusion that, in abandoning the Jefferson administration, Randolph was influenced by thoroughly conscientious motives. Indeed, he even thinks that Randolph can be set down as a political purist<sup>3</sup>; and his opinions are in harmony with what was thought of Randolph by many of his own contemporaries. "On all private claims, or where his judgment was not warped by party spirit, he voted without fear, favor, or affection," says Sawyer.<sup>4</sup> And then Sawyer tells us, by way of illustration, how Randolph, on one occasion, was lifted in a crippled condition into the house of Philip Barton Key at Georgetown, and spent about a month there under the tender care of his family, and yet shortly afterwards, when Key's title to

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1812-13, v. 3, 782.

<sup>3</sup> *Amer. Statesmen Series*, 278.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1816-17, v. 2, 323.

<sup>4</sup> *P.* 32.

a seat in the House was contested, rose in the House and, after warmly expressing his obligations to Key for his kindness, declared that he felt bound, under the circumstances, to vote in favor of the contestant.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most valuable witnesses that we have to the character of Randolph is Thomas H. Benton, who knew him well. In his chapter in his *Thirty Years' View*, on Randolph, he pays him this remarkable tribute:

“His parliamentary life was resplendent in talent—elevated in moral tone—always moving on the lofty lines of honor and patriotism and scorning everything mean and selfish. He was the indignant enemy of personal and plunder legislation, and the very scourge of intrigue and corruption. He revered an honest man in the humblest garb, and scorned the dishonest, though plated with gold.”<sup>2</sup>

If anything, Randolph was too independent in his bearing with respect to office and its advantages. In a letter to his stepfather, he expressed the opinion that a report that some appointment was to be offered to him was totally destitute of foundation, adding:

“I believe there must have been displayed in my demeanor throughout my intercourse with every branch of the executive somewhat of that independence which I have always felt of their favor. There is no fear, believe me, that a person of this description shall be importuned to accept appointments when so many capable persons really want them.”<sup>3</sup>

No member of Congress ever soiled his hands less with the abuses of patronage. There is a trace of the old-fashioned inflation of speech, which we find in some of his early letters, in these comments in one of his letters to Nicholson on executive patronage: “It is this monster which threatens our destruction. . . . Will men pre-

<sup>1</sup> P. 32.

<sup>2</sup> P. 474.

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 26, 1801, Lucas MSS.

fer the loaves and fishes of the hour to the glory of rejuvenating their country or of restoring to our manners and our language the nervous tone of independence."<sup>1</sup> He had nothing but disdain, he said in a letter to Monroe, for those "*soi-disant*" Republicans who panted for military command and the emoluments of contracts.<sup>2</sup> In a later letter to Nicholson, he replies to certain remarks of Nicholson on the mode in which men were brought forward to public notice by saying: "To me the tendency of the power of appointment to office (no matter to what individual it be trusted) to debauch the nation and to create a low, dirty, time-serving spirit is a much more serious evil."<sup>3</sup> The disinterested principles, which John Taylor, of Caroline, championed, and the men who possessed them, Randolph thought could not be too much insisted on as the only bond of union among Republicans.<sup>4</sup> Nor were these mere empty professions. As strict as his code of political ethics was, he can be truly said to have lived up to it as nearly as a man can ever be expected to live up to a rigorous code of any sort; and it is a very pleasant thing to anyone who detests spoils politics to feel that, despite the fact that Randolph was almost entirely cut off during the greater part of his political life, by reason of his political independence, from the use of political patronage, his standing with his constituents remained essentially unimpaired. But he was fully cognizant of its power under ordinary conditions. "I know," he said on one occasion, "that we can not give to those who apply for offices equal to their expectations; and I also know that with one bone I can call 500 dogs."<sup>5</sup>

It is the habit of most writers about Randolph to speak

<sup>1</sup> Oct. 1, 1801, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 3, 1803, Libr. Cong.

<sup>3</sup> April 21, 1804, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>4</sup> Letter to Monroe, June 15, 1803, Libr. Cong.

<sup>5</sup> *Reminiscences of Ben. Perley Poore*, v. 1, 355.

of his severance from the Jefferson administration as if it doomed him to entire political destruction; but the force of this view is lost upon us. There were many chances against Randolph ever reaching the Presidency under any circumstances, and, after all, as great and lasting fame, perhaps, can be acquired in the House of Representatives as in the Presidential Cabinet. His fame would certainly not have been greater, we imagine, if he had been Governor of Virginia, and the only time that he ever really lost reputation was when he was on his mission to Russia, unless it were during his term as a Senator when he was occasionally irresponsible. From the time that he ended his connection with the Jefferson administration until he declined re-election to the House in 1829, with the exception of his temporary occultation during the War of 1812, and the term that he declined in 1817, he had a seat in Congress; and, even when he was in the Senate, notwithstanding his run-down mental condition at times, he exerted a powerful influence over the course of federal legislation and the fate of the Adams administration.

It is true that Randolph did not have the party backing, which often adds so much to the usefulness of a member of the House. It could not be expected of him, he said in 1807, "that he should sink into that vile and supple thing, an humble follower, a pliant tool of a majority and tacitly disavow the principles for which he had contended two years before."<sup>1</sup> Later, he spoke of himself as "a desultory kind of partisan acting on his own impulses;"<sup>2</sup> and still later as "a feeble isolated individual."<sup>3</sup> This language, it is hardly necessary to say, was, in a measure, conventional like his memorable words on another occasion, when, apologizing for the extent to which he had taxed the attention of the House, he said: "I ask its patience, its pardon, and its pity."<sup>4</sup> Finally, his freedom

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1807-08, v. 1, 850.

<sup>3</sup> *A. of C.*, 1815-16, v. 1, 533.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1809-10, v. 1, 149.

<sup>4</sup> *A. of C.*, 1812-13, v. 3, 785.

from formal allegiance to party sat upon him so naturally that he spoke of it as carelessly and amiably as he did on one occasion of the class of old bachelors of which he declared that he was a most unfortunate member.<sup>1</sup> For instance, in 1820, he disclaimed any intention of speaking of the Monroe administration; "for he knew," he said, "perhaps less of them than any man in the nation."<sup>2</sup> And, on a later occasion, his nonchalance was still more pronounced; for, in a debate on the contingent expenses of the House, he is reported to have used these words:

"They had made him for the first time in 20 years a present at this session of a knife; and he believed he should carry it home as *spolia opima* and hand it down as a trophy of his public service of some 20 years, nearly 14 of which—just double the time, that Jacob had served for Rachel—had been spent in opposition to what is called Government; for he commenced his political apprenticeship in the ranks of opposition and, could he add 14 more to them, he supposed some political Laban would double his servitude and condemn him to toil in the barren field of opposition; for he despaired of seeing any man elected President whose conduct he should entirely approve. He should never be in favor at court, as he had somehow as great an alacrity at getting into a minority as honest Jack Falstaff had at sinking. It was perhaps the place he was best fitted for, Mr. Randolph said, as he had not strength to encounter the details and drudgery of business; habit had rendered it familiar to him; and, after all, it was not without its sweets as well as its bitters, since it involved the glorious privilege of finding fault—one very dear to the depraved condition of human nature."<sup>3</sup>

Randolph jested in this way about his independence of party because he could well afford to do so, with his constituents so solidly arrayed behind him and so inalienably devoted to him that even John Quincy Adams was

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1821-22, v. 1, 823.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1819-20, v. 1, 1068.

<sup>3</sup> *A. of C.*, 1819-20, v. 2, 1465.

compelled to admit the fact to the extent of saying that they seemed to be as much enamored with him as Titania was with the ass' head of Bottom.<sup>1</sup>

But anyone who formed the opinion that, when Randolph abjured party ties, he became, in the language of the English ballad, a "lone and banished man," a mere party outlaw, would be gravely at fault. After he severed his connection with the Democratic Party, he not only hung about its flanks, and, at times, threw its columns into serious disorder, but, at times, he even induced its representatives in the House to desert their own acknowledged leaders and to fall in behind his dancing crest as it gallantly rose and fell with the waves of parliamentary strife. And, even after the standard of the Democratic Party had passed into such masterful hands as those of Calhoun, Clay, and Lowndes, and the patriotic impulses of the country had become fervently enlisted in behalf of the War of 1812, his influence was still great enough to muster some 15 democratic votes in opposition to the declaration of war. Subsequently, when the issue of State sovereignty had become more and more prominent with the crusade against Southern slavery, and tariff, internal improvement, and other political issues had become more and more drawn to it, like so many straws and leaves to a whirlwind, he was soon recognized as the ablest and most resourceful advocate of the State-Rights creed, which the ingenious intellect of Calhoun afterwards made subtler but, if anything, weaker.

The truth is that, throughout Randolph's political career, after he had thrown aside the reins of party leadership in the House, he was always so successful in almost every great debate, in which he took part, in mustering a considerable body of supporters behind him that his influence nearly acquired the dignity of that of an organized third party.

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*, v. 8, 328.



We have already said enough to convey to the mind of the reader the fact that jealousy of power in all its forms was the index to his political life; jealousy of the Executive; jealousy of the Judiciary; jealousy even of "King Numbers" himself. If he was not jealous of the Legislature, it was only because he deemed its power, if anything, too effectively counterpoised by that of the Executive and Judiciary. He did, however, have a marked contempt, half serious, half humorous, for the itch of legislation which loads up the American Statute Book with so many crude and superfluous laws. On this subject, he is thus reported as speaking on one occasion in the House:

"We see about November—about the time the fogs set in—men enough assembled in the various Legislatures, General and State, to make a regiment; then the legislative maggot begins to bite; then exists the rage to make new and repeal old laws. I do not think we would find ourselves at all worse off if no law of a general nature had been passed by either General or State Governments for 10 or 12 years last past. Like Mr. Jefferson, I am averse to too much regulation—averse to making the extreme medicine of the Constitution our daily food."<sup>1</sup>

On another occasion, the general bias with which Randolph approached every exercise of governmental authority, found expression in these terse and felicitous words: "Ours is not a government of confidence. It is a government of diffidence and of suspicion, and it is only by being suspicious that it can remain a free government."<sup>2</sup>

Even his devotion to State Sovereignty and his hostility to professional soldiers and excise-men were but manifestations of the same intense dread of perverted power. In one of his letters to his friend Edward Booker, he said:

"It [the side espoused by Randolph] is the rights of the States against Federal encroachment; it is the liberty of the

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1815-16, v. I, 1132.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1807-08, v. I, 1345.



citizen (subject, if you please) against all encroachment, State or Federal; that is and ever has been my creed. I challenge any man to put his finger upon any vote or act of mine that contravenes it, or to show the vote given by me which tends to abridge the rights of the States, the franchises of the citizen, or even to add to his burthens in any shape; of personal service or of contribution to the public purse."<sup>1</sup>

Except, he added, the Mediterranean Fund which was a fund created for a limited time and a specific object.

In the case of regular soldiers and excise-men, his impatience with governmental restraints sometimes escaped in such surcharged phrases as to take him for the time being out of the sphere of responsible statesmanship; as, when urged by his maxim that a standing army is the death by which all republics have died,<sup>2</sup> he defined a regular soldier as a slave who sells himself to be shot at for 6 pence a day<sup>3</sup>; or, as when his morbid antipathy to Executive intrusion into personal privacy caused him to denounce an excise-man as "a hell hound of tyranny."<sup>4</sup> (a)

In passing judgment upon such extreme language as these last words, we must remember that Randolph's political education, as boy and man, ran back to the first struggle between the Federalists and the anti-Federalists, and that abomination of excise taxes as well as standing armies was one of the conspicuous features of the political thought and feelings of that time.

As for the principle of State Sovereignty, we must also remember that, for many years of our earlier political history, it was as ardently cherished by the Northern as the Southern States of the Union. Henry Adams, in his *John Randolph*, goes so far as to say that the right of a State to interpose in the case of a deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise by the Federal Government of powers, not

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 9, 1816, Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1807-08, v. 2, 1908.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, p. 1825.

<sup>4</sup> *A. of C.*, 1823-24, v. 2, 2365.

granted to it by the Federal Constitution (the very language of James Madison in the Virginia Resolutions of 1798), was "for many years the undisputed faith of a vast majority of the American people."<sup>1</sup> Nor was John Randolph more of a rhapsodist in hymning the glory of Virginia than Josiah Quincy was in hymning that of Massachusetts; (a) but the difference between Randolph and most of his State-Rights contemporaries is that he was always prepared to defend his State-Rights convictions with force. Such was his position during the period of the Alien and Sedition Laws, which he once called the Reign of Terror, when, if his belief was well-founded, Virginia went so far as to establish an armory for the purpose of resisting, if necessary, Federalist tyranny. Such, too, was his position when he said of the Tariff Bill of 1824:

"It marks us out as the victims of a worse than Egyptian bondage; it is a barter of so much of our rights, of so much of the fruits of our labor for political power to be transferred to other hands. It ought to be met, and I trust it will be met, in the Southern country as was the Stamp Act, and by all those measures which I will not detain the House by recapitulating which succeeded the Stamp Act, and produced the final breach with the Mother Country, which took about 10 years to bring about, as I trust, in my conscience, it will not take as long to bring about similar results from this measure, should it become a law."<sup>2</sup>

And such, finally, was his position, when Andrew Jackson threatened to invade South Carolina as Abraham Lincoln afterwards actually invaded Virginia.

If the mortal duel between the North and the South had to take place, his idea was to engage the former in it while the wind and the sun were not so much in her favor.

Of all the episodes in Randolph's political career, the

<sup>1</sup> P. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1823-24, v. 2, 2360.

one most open to attack is his opposition to the War of 1812; but, when the unreasoning impulses of national pride are stifled, it may well be asked in our time whether this opposition was not as wise as that which he asserted so vigorously to the series of restrictive measures which had no practical effect except that of manacling our hands behind our back while our enemies were beating us in the face.

The policy of the United States before the War of 1812 should have been, as Randolph contended: to eschew, as long as possible, any active alliance with either France or England, and especially all fraudulent evasions of obligations imposed upon us by our neutrality, but, in case we had to turn to one side or the other, to escape the crossed swords that were playing in deadly *carte* and *tierce* above our heads, to take our place beside the English democracy rather than beside the military despotism of Napoleon, which, if his plans had not miscarried at Boulogne, might well have left to the United States, as Randolph said at the time, nothing but the poor privilege of Ulysses—that of being the last to be devoured. If we had to become a belligerent, the events which led up to the War of 1812 pointed as unmistakably to the wisdom of an *entente* between the United States and Great Britain as did the events, which led up to the recent World War, when another monster was seeking to set up another Moloch. Great Britain did not have the general feeling of respect and good will for the United States then that she had on the eve of the great World War; that is true enough. Nor did the American people, as a whole, have as much good feeling for England then as they have now. These facts, of course, made the situation much less tractable than it would otherwise have been; but, if the War of the American Revolution had not been so recent, and American gratitude to France for the service, rendered by her to us in that war, and the influence of the French Revolution

upon the temper of our people had not been so strong, it is unlikely that the conduct of England to the United States, before our declaration of war in 1812, would have been attended by the arrogant outrages and the vexatious pretensions which urged on the war. As it was, when our declaration was made, the British Government had disavowed the Chesapeake outrage, the impressment of our seamen, which was our real grievance against England, had sunk almost out of sight, and the obnoxious Orders of Council, which had also been a just cause of national resentment on our part had been actually revoked, though not to our knowledge. Under such circumstances, with a little more patience for the desperate necessities of England in her struggle not only for her own preservation, but for that of human freedom everywhere, including the United States; in other words, with just a little more reflection, deliberation, and delay we might have wholly averted a war which might well be a source of almost unmixed regret to both England and us if it had not brought about the establishment of the undefended boundary line between Canada and the United States, which is now the surest pledge of peace between the latter countries. We should either have declared war against England earlier, or not at all; and that Randolph should have had such a clear insight into the larger significance of the contest between England and France, which provoked the War of 1812, and should have asserted his repugnance to that war so fearlessly, are among the things, we think, that vindicate most strikingly his sagacity and foresight as a statesman. Nor could there be a better illustration of the rapidity with which his own constituents, who rejected him in 1813, awoke, as the result of bitter disillusionment, to the wisdom of his counsels, than the fact that they forced him from his retirement and re-elected him to Congress in 1815.

But, in no respect, was Randolph a truer statesman

than in his aversion to the institution of negro slavery. The slave traffic he simply abhorred; and there is little room for doubt that, if he could have freed all the negro slaves in Virginia under proper conditions he would have freed them. On one occasion, he wrote to Wm. Leigh from Europe, asking him to remember him, in the kindest manner, to all his slaves and added, that he wished that he could, by a word, make them all white.<sup>1</sup> It was no misconceived enthusiasm which inspired the abolitionist poet, John G. Whittier, to write his melodious lines on Randolph. And Randolph's hostility to slavery was not only founded upon genuine humanitarian impulses, but upon a clear statesmanlike sense of the blighting effect exerted by slavery upon the economic welfare of Virginia. "Suppose," he once said, "instead of ceding her Northwestern Territory to Congress, Virginia had at the peace of 1783 driven every negro and mulatto, bond or free, across the Ohio; would she now, think you, be less populous or powerful than she is at present?"<sup>2</sup> The report, which he rendered in 1803, as the Chairman of a Committee appointed to consider a memorial, which had come up to the House from Indiana, praying for the temporary exemption of that territory from the anti-slavery prohibition in the Northwest Territory Ordinance of 1787, is one of the most notable productions of his pen. It summed up the conclusions of the Committee in these words:

"That the rapid population of the State of Ohio sufficiently evinces, in the opinion of your Committee, that the labor of the slave is not necessary to promote the growth and settlement of Colonies in that region; that this labor, demonstrably the dearest of any, can only be employed to advantage in the cultivation of products more valuable than any known to that

<sup>1</sup> *Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor.*, Cl'k's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>2</sup> *A. of C.*, 1823-24, v. 2, 2381.

quarter of the United States; and the Committee deem it highly dangerous and inexpedient to impair a provision wisely calculated to promote the happiness and prosperity of the Northwestern Country and to give strength and security to that extensive frontier. In the salutary operation of this sagacious and benevolent restraint, it is believed that the inhabitants of Indiana will at no very distant date find ample remuneration for a temporary privation of labor and emigration."<sup>1</sup>

It is true that Randolph did not often give public expression to his disapproval of slavery, and, as we shall see, Nancy Randolph once taunted him with what she supposed to be the inconsistency between his avowals of enmity to it in private and his reticence on the subject in public. There were many reasons, of course, besides mere selfish timidity, based on deference for a formidable body of public opinion, why he should not have been more outspoken, as a public representative, than he was in the announcement of his anti-slavery convictions. Much besides the institution of slavery was involved in the long sectional conflict between the North and the South, and not a little is to be lost by too frank admissions in political as well as other contests. Moreover, Randolph was kept entirely too busy throughout his political life in insisting upon the constitutional guarantees which the Federal Constitution had thrown around slave property, and in guarding the peace of the South against external attack, to have much time left for promoting the emancipation of the negro in Virginia. Nothing, however, could furnish a more convincing proof of the extent, to which the movement of the forces making for emancipation in Virginia, was retarded by outside interference, than the fact that Randolph never wavered in his intent to emancipate all his own slaves, though almost incessantly kept provoked to the highest pitch in his later years by encroachments

<sup>1</sup> *Amer. State Papers*, Pub. Lands, v. 1, 146.

on what he deemed to be the constitutional rights of the South.

The fragmentary *Reminiscences* of the Rev. John T. Clark, an Episcopal Rector of Halifax County, who knew Randolph well, is a document of the highest value as testimony to the nature of Randolph's views respecting slavery:

"Although in public, and particularly in Congress," the Rev. Mr. Clark says, "Mr. Randolph was the ready and fearless defender of the slaveholder, and would not yield the smallest of his rights to a stranger or an enemy, nor tolerate for one moment any interference between him and his slaves; (a) yet never did he, like the superficial and incompetent State's Rights Politicians of the present generation, who precipitated the South into ruin—never did he defend slavery in the abstract. Never did he go to the length of his successors in public life, who rushed in where wise men, not to say anything of angels—feared to peep, and claimed for slavery a divine right. On the contrary, like Washington and Jefferson and the other statesmen of their day and character, who gave Virginia her reputation, a reputation which no one but the mad empirics of her own bosom could destroy, he looked upon slavery as an evil, he mourned over its existence, he regretted that he ever owned a slave; and, although, like almost everybody else in his day, he regarded it as ineradicable, yet never did he conceal in his private intercourse with his associates his heartfelt and deep-seated conviction that it was a social, moral and political evil. Moreover, he was always anxious as to the comfort of his slaves; he often preached to them himself, and sometimes he would get ministers of the gospel, in whom he had confidence, of any Church, to preach to them. Yet, while doing this, he did not any more than the rest of us see the hopelessness of any real change in the character of the great body of slaves while in slavery. Indeed, in one thing he was much behind many slaveholders who laid claim to anything like his intellect and experience, but who were guided by a higher and better principle than even genius or intellect can give—even the love of God in Christ Jesus—in his opposition



to the Colonization Society. After a short hesitation, he settled down in uniform, if not bitter, opposition to this noble Society, which, amid opposition and ridicule from so many and such different people and sections, has done so much and is still in the way of doing so much more for the black man and for Africa. But still, notwithstanding his opposition to the Colonization Society, he gave his dying testimony to the value of freedom, as also to his hope and belief that in due time freedom and its accompanying advantages would elevate the race; for surely a man of John Randolph's intelligence, to say nothing of his good will to his slaves, would not have emancipated 300—"¹(a)

So far as we know, the only support that Randolph ever gave to the plans of the African Colonization Society was to attend and address a public meeting held under its auspices in the City of Washington on December 21, 1816, at which Henry Clay presided and spoke with his usual force and fervor. In this address Randolph said that, with a view to securing the support of all the citizens of the United States, it ought to be made known that the colonization scheme tended to secure the property of every master to, in, and over his slaves; that it was a notorious fact that the free negroes were regarded by every slave-owner as one of the greatest sources of the insecurity and unprofitableness of slave property; that they excited discontent among their fellow-beings; that they acted as channels of communication, not only between different slaves, but between slaves of different districts; and that they were the depositories of stolen goods and the promoters of mischief. Apart then from those higher and nobler motives which had already been so well presented, the slave-owner, Randolph declared, was in a worldly sense interested in throwing this population out of the bosom of the people. He further said that, if a place for colonizing the free negroes and a mode for transporting

¹ Bouldin, MSS.



them there could be provided, there were hundreds, nay thousands, of citizens who would, by manumitting their slaves, relieve themselves from the cares attendant upon their possession.<sup>1</sup>

It is manifest that the object of these observations was to soothe the misgivings of the slaveholder about the new movement into quiescence; and it is equally manifest, we think, that the countenance given to it by Randolph was quite guarded. It was impossible, we should say, for such a practical mind as his to have reposed much confidence at any time in such a visionary enterprise as that of the African Colonization Society.

However this may be, in 1826 he even refused to present a petition of the Society to the Senate, although entreated to do so by Francis Scott Key. His reasons for the refusal were fully presented to Chief Justice Marshall, and, afterwards, when he was reporting his conversation with the Chief Justice to Dr. Brockenbrough, he did so in the following narrative form:

“That I thought the tendency of it bad and mischievous; that a spirit of morbid sensibility, religious fanaticism, vanity, and the love of display, were the chief moving causes of that society.

“That true humanity to the slave was to make him do a fair day’s work, and to treat him with all the kindness compatible with due subordination. By that means, the master could afford to clothe and feed him well, and take care of him in sickness and old age; while the morbid sentimentalist could not do this. His slave was unprovided with necessaries, unless pilfered from his master’s neighbors; because the owner could not furnish them out of the profits of the negro’s labor—there being none. And, at the master’s death, the poor slaves were generally sold for debt (because the philanthropist had to go to BANK, instead of drawing upon his crop), and were dispersed from Carolina to the Balize; so that in the end the superfine

<sup>1</sup> *Nat’l. Intelligencer*, Dec. 24, 1816.

master turned out, like all other *ultras*, the worst that could be for the negroes.

“This system of false indulgence, too, *educates* ( I use the word in its strict and true meaning) all those pampered menials who, sooner or later, find their way to some Fulcher, the hand-cuffs, and the Alabama negro trader’s slave-chain. How many such have I met within the different ‘coffles’ (Mungo Park) of slaves that I had known living on the fat of the land, and drest as well as their masters and mistresses. I wished all the free negroes removed, with their own consent, out of the slave States especially, but that, from the institution of the Passover to the latest experience of man, it would be found that no two distinct peoples could occupy the same territory, under one government, but in the relation of master and vassal.

“The Exodus of the Jews was effected by the visible and miraculous interposition of the hand of God; and that, without the same miraculous assistance, the Colonization Society would not remove the tithe of the increase of the free blacks, while their proceedings and talks disturbed the rest of the slaves.”<sup>1</sup>

The real reproach to Randolph in his relations to slavery is that he should not have had more sympathy with the powerful movement in the Virginia Legislature of 1832 which failed in the House to carry a proposition looking to the gradual abolition of slavery in Virginia by only 15 votes.<sup>2</sup> This was just after the Nat Turner insurrection in Southampton County had taken place. Then he had a better opportunity than he ever had on any other occasion in his life to deal a shattering blow at the institution which he cordially disliked in his heart. But, if we can judge from a very imperfect report of his last speech at Charlotte Court House, he was not in accord with the movement; for here is what he said:

“There is a meeting-house in this village, built by a respectable denomination. I never was in it; though, like myself, it is

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 266.

<sup>2</sup> *Va.’s Attitude Towards Slavery and Secession*, by B. B. Munford, 47.

mouldering away. The pulpit of that meeting-house was polluted by permitting a black African to preach in it. If I had been there, I would have taken the uncircumcised dog by the throat, led him before a magistrate, and committed him to jail. I told the ladies, they, sweet souls, who dressed their beds with their whitest sheets, and uncorked for him their best wine, [that they] were not far from having mulatto children.

“I am no prophet, but I then predicted the insurrection. The insurrection came; was ever such a panic? Dismay was spread through the country. I despised it when it was here. To despise distant danger, is not true courage, but to despise it when you have done all you could to avoid it, and it has and would come, is true courage. Look at the conduct of our last General Assembly. The speeches that were made there were little dreamed of. What kind of doctrine was preached on the floor of the House of Burgesses? If I had been there I should have moved that the first orator, who took the liberty to advance that doctrine, should be arrested and prosecuted by the State’s attorney.”<sup>1</sup>

Very different was the grave, measured language in which he had communicated to Nicholson, many years before, the facts connected with the servile insurrection headed by the negro, Gabriel.

“Rumor has doubtless acquainted you with an attempt at insurrection made by the slaves of this State. It is now ascertained to have been partial and ill concerted, and has been quelled without any bloodshed, but that which streamed upon the scaffold. The executions have been not so numerous as might, under such circumstances, have been expected. The accused have exhibited a spirit, which, if it becomes general, must deluge the Southern country in blood. They manifested a sense of their rights, and contempt of danger, and a thirst for revenge which portend the most unhappy consequences. In this part of the community, no such temper has been exhibited; nor has any apprehension prevailed except in Richmond and its immediate neighborhood.

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 189.

"A young negro man, a blacksmith, had projected the scheme of firing the port of the city; taking possession of the stone bridge, which connects the two quarters of the town, whilst the inhabitants were busied with the fire; seizing the treasury and the arsenal at the other extremity, then firing it, and making a general massacre of the inhabitants. For this purpose, he had manufactured a number of rude arms, had collected his associates to the number of 5 to 600; and the execution of his purpose was frustrated only by a heavy fall of rain which made the water courses impassable. It does not appear that the negroes of the city were concerned in the plot. You have, doubtless, had the story with every exaggeration, and will not be surprized to learn that our federalists have endeavored to make an electioneering engine of it. Monroe has been very active. The quiet of the capital is secured by a competent military force and all danger for the present at an end."<sup>1</sup>

Josiah Quincy, the son of the eminent Federalist of the same name, once asked Randolph who was the greatest orator that he had ever heard; expecting that he would answer "Patrick Henry." But, to his surprise, the reply was: "A slave. She was a mother, and her rostrum was the auction block."<sup>2</sup> Between his repugnance to slavery, and his jealous hostility to all efforts to abolish it *ab extra*, Randolph was often visited with misconstruction. "I have," he is reported as declaring on one occasion, "no hesitation in saying slavery is a curse to the master. I have been held up, as any man will be, who speaks his mind fairly and boldly, as a blackish sort of a white and a whitish sort of a black—as an advocate for slavery in the abstract."<sup>3</sup> And that, on the whole, there *was* a lack of coherence in the enunciation of his public views about slavery, cannot be denied.

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, Sept. 26, 1800, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> *Figures of the Past*, by Josiah Quincy, 212.

<sup>3</sup> *Niles Reg.*, v. 6 (3d series), 453, Aug. 26, 1826.

## CHAPTER IX

### **Randolph as a Man**

It would be a grievous misconception to imagine that Randolph was wholly given over to politics, necessary as an occasional escape from Roanoke to Washington was to dispel the melancholy which always settled down upon him when he was withdrawn for a considerable time from political and social excitements. Sawyer tells us that, outside of the House, Randolph would not talk politics; preferring to discuss agricultural or other topics.<sup>1</sup> In his Diary, he kept a minute record of the weather and of his social activities and inserted in it besides an extraordinary farrago of memoranda relating to many other miscellaneous subjects; but the references in this book to politics are quite meagre. In other words, Randolph was not one of those bores whose conversation is wholly subdued, like the dyer's hand, to what he works in; he was not a mere feverish politician; nor a mere ill-natured satirist. He was a man of the world; a gentleman and a sportsman, as well as a statesman; an orator, and a planter. He had a keen zest for social intercourse with men and women; he entered with intense sympathy into the interests and feelings of the young; he deeply loved some of his relations; he was almost romantically attached to his intimate friends; he devoured good books of all sorts; he was never so happy as when travelling, and he had a passion for horses, dogs, and guns.

<sup>1</sup> Sawyer, 45.

All the traits of character which made him so many enemies, which led Sergeant to put James Buchanan on his guard against his friendship,<sup>1</sup> and Sawyer to declare too broadly, that he was not much respected as a politician or beloved as a man,<sup>2</sup> were referable to infirmity of temper. He was proud, imperious, sensitive as the aspen leaf, fundamentally Anglo-Saxon, but partly Celtic. No one knew his shortcomings better than he himself; for he had too much sound manhood not to confess and lament them at times. There was a touch of false pride in his declaration that he was descended from a race which was never known to forsake a friend or to forgive a foe.<sup>3</sup> And there was an element of extravagant self-disparagement in that other declaration of his made at a time when he was laboring in the throes of religious conversion, that his temper was naturally impatient of injury but insatiably vindictive under insult and indignity.<sup>4</sup> (a) But when, with the perfect frankness, which was one of the nobler features of his character, he said in a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough that his unprosperous life, as he called it, was the fruit of an ungovernable temper,<sup>5</sup> his self-analysis was correct; and it was doubtless the same cause for self-reproach which was behind the remorse that he exhibited upon his death-bed—assuming that he was then responding to any rational impulse at all.

Of the extraordinary instability of his temper and of its tendency, when acutely irritated, not to stop short even of aggressive malice, evidence is not wanting. It shows that boorish or tactless words or conduct, which the ordinary individual would resent with a frigid glance or a contemptuous shrug at the most, were enough to excite his choler to a high degree. A very good illustration of this fact is afforded by an incident which Jacob Harvey

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Buchanan*, by G. T. Curtis, v. 1, 29.

<sup>2</sup> P. 124.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 2, 248.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, v. 2, 102.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*, v. 2, 101.

has told us in his lively manner, which not infrequently runs away with him: Among the fellow-passengers of Randolph and himself on "the *Amity*" was a good-humored but coarse-fibred Dutchman, whose rubs were soon drawing electric sparks from Randolph.

"A whist party," says Harvey, "was made up; the Captain and Mr. Randolph against the Dutchman and one of our Yorkshire passengers. After the cards had been dealt, and each gentleman had examined his hand, the Dutchman cried out:

" 'I bet a guinea I get three tricks this time!'

" 'Done, Mr. ——,' exclaimed Randolph instantaneously! This alarmed his opponent, who had so often previously witnessed Randolph's good luck, and who, moreover, had a natural antipathy to losing his guineas. He therefore re-examined his hand, and then said in a subdued tone:

" 'Oh, stop! I spoke too fast as I did not see. Eh! well I will bet a guinea that I get two tricks!'

" 'Done Mr. ——,' exclaimed Randolph in an excited tone.

" 'Ah no! What did I say? Let me look again. Oh! I made a mistake, but I will bet on *one* trick anyhow.'

" 'Done Mr. ——!' exclaimed Randolph for the third time, and now very much excited. His eyes sparkled, his lips were compressed, and he was evidently very angry.

The Dutchman, however, either did not observe the change in his manner, or, if he did, his love of money conquered his fears; and, very composedly looking once more at his cards, he said quite coolly:

" 'What are trumps? Oh! Spades you say! That is bad, I forgot; and I won't bet at all.'

"By this time, Randolph was in a fury, and, before any of us could interpose, he arose from his chair, threw his cards on the table, fixed his eyes on Mr. ——, and said:

" 'Why you lubberly fellow, do you know where you are? Is this the first time you ever played with gentlemen? Are you sure that you took a cabin passage? Captain where's his ticket? You belong to the steerage, Sir! You are out of

place, Sir! Three times you have offered to bet, and three times have I taken it; and now you back out, Sir!

"Then, throwing down a guinea on the table, he continued: 'I believe I owe you a few shillings, Sir. Give me change this instant, Sir. I will not remain another instant in your debt, Sir. Come, Sir, the change; and then we shall be quits forever.'

"Mr. — was astounded. He opened his eyes and replied: 'Why Mr. Randolph, you make a great fuss about nothing. I cannot change your guinea all in a hurry, and, if you'll only listen to reason, I'll show you where——.'

"But Randolph cut him short, and, in a very excited tone, said: 'Give me change this moment, Sir; or by Heaven you shall go ashore!' (We were then on the Banks of Newfoundland). 'Yes, Sir, you shall go ashore. I'll not remain in the same ship with you, Sir. What, Sir! To back out of a bet with a gentleman, and then defend your conduct? Go ashore, Sir!'

"Mr. —, more and more confounded, exclaimed: 'Now Mr. Randolph, what do you get into such a passion for! Only listen to reason, and I will show you where you are *wrong*; only listen.'

"Randolph cut him short again in a perfect rage. '*Wrong*, sir! And do you dare to tell me, John Randolph of Roanoke, that I am *wrong* in a matter of honor? *Wrong*, sir, did you say! Take *that*!' And, suiting the action to the word, he thrust the candle across the table into Mr. —'s face, and then fell back on his seat quite exhausted."

The narrative is too long to be further continued *verbatim*. Mr. — quietly arose, and left the cabin; Randolph apologized to the other members of the company, and went off to his state-room. Later, Harvey expostulated with Randolph, and the Captain took Mr. — aside, and told him that he was partly to blame himself for the occurrence; receiving in reply the good-natured assurance that Mr. — did not mind what Randolph had said at all, since he regarded him as half-cracked, and felt certain that he would forget all about the



matter before the next day. The result was that amicable relations were in time re-established between Randolph and Mr. ——. But not permanently, until Randolph had had occasion to administer another rebuke to the thick-skinned Dutchman, and the latter had come to realize that Randolph (to use one of Randolph's own phrases) was not, like himself, made of brick earth. (a) Then, the pair became so intimate that, when the rest of the cabin passengers were reading, writing, or sleeping, and Randolph was at a loss for an auditor, he would pin Mr. — in a corner, and keep him there for an hour or two, listening to the Greek poetry which he made a point of reading aloud to him.<sup>1</sup>

Manifestly, this story is tricked out with a good deal of fanciful embroidery. Not to go further, we have been told by Randolph himself that he knew only enough Greek "to help him to the etymology of a word"<sup>2</sup>; but there is enough truth in the story to illustrate our point.

How dangerous it is, however, to place too implicit a trust in stories about Randolph, even when told by a substantially reliable anecdotist like Harvey, is impressed upon us by another story in regard to Randolph's fiery temper, which Harvey says was communicated to him by Randolph himself.

Its burden is that a tall, matter-of-fact New Englander, who had formed the idea of investing a part of the fortune, that he had made as a tobacco merchant, in Roanoke, asked Randolph, immediately after he had been tendered the hospitality of the latter's table, what he would take for "niggers and all"; and was conducted by Randolph to the boundary of his patrimonial lands and told that, if he ever crossed this boundary again, to look out for Randolph's best rifle-ball.<sup>3</sup> This story is evidently but a variation, in the Darwinian process of evolution, to which

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 331.

<sup>2</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>3</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 354.

anecdotes about famous men, especially when they relate to eccentric types of character, are even more slavishly subject than mammals or birds. Obviously, the same story re-appears in a paper by Henry Carrington published by Bouldin; only in this instance the offender is a Georgian, and awakens Randolph's wrath by telling him that he was thinking that he was an eunuch.<sup>1</sup> The real basis for the story is furnished us by John Randolph Bryan, who was at Roanoke in 1818 or 1819, when the incident, out of which it sprang, occurred.

"The blackguard," he says, "asked Mr. Randolph what he would take for a servant—Hanno, I think—who was waiting at the table; and Mr. Randolph gave the fellow a night's lodging and the next morning told him that, but for his having eaten his bread, he would have had him tied up to the roughest oak tree in his yard and flogged by the overseer."<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, it is not too much to say that all the stories which represent Randolph as breaking out into paroxysms of indecent violence, or descending to vulgarity in conduct or speech, should be received with the utmost distrust. Except so far as they rest on the testimony in the Randolph will litigation, going to establish the insanity of Randolph, or on other evidence relating to the different periods, when he was insane, they emanate from disgruntled overseers, personal or political enemies, or tattling countryside gossips, to whom Randolph was the eighth wonder of the modern world.

The stories which Bouldin gathered from W. T. Harvey, a man who was one of Randolph's overseers, shortly after he returned from Russia, and which present Randolph to us simply as a drunken bully and a coarse vulgarian, all arise out of incidents, which, if they occurred at all,

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 129.

<sup>2</sup> Bryan MSS. See also testimony of Judge Leigh in *Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor.*, Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

occurred when Randolph might just as well have been in a mad-house as at Roanoke. And yet, referring to Harvey, Bouldin actually says: "We say we are glad we took notes from him, because we feel that we must draw Mr. Randolph as he really was."<sup>1</sup>

The most authentic of the stories which impute flagrant violence to Randolph are those which relate to his neighbor, Robert Carrington, the son of the elder Judge Paul Carrington. It was said of him that he was the only person of whom Randolph was ever afraid; but we should have to know more than we do about the intercourse between the two men to admit that Randolph feared even him; though there can be little doubt that Robert Carrington was a man of very resolute character. An entry, under date of June 8, 1830, in one of Randolph's journals comprises simply these three words: "Robert C's airs."<sup>2</sup> This was doubtless the prelude to the litigious encounter which took place between Randolph and Carrington, when Randolph filed an action for trespass against Carrington in the County Court of Charlotte County, alleging that the latter had ploughed up and planted with corn a road used by Randolph, which led along the Staunton River, and across the Carrington estate from Randolph's Middle Quarter to his Lower Quarter, and when Carrington filed an action against Randolph in the same court, alleging that, contrary to an agreement between the two to maintain one common enclosure, Randolph had allowed estrays from his property to wander over to Carrington's lands and do a great amount of injury. Both of these actions were brought in the early part of 1832 when Randolph's derangement was at its worst; and they were both entered in the latter part of 1832, after he had recovered his reason, "dismissed—agreed"; which, of course, indicates that the parties had arrived at an amicable settlement with each other.

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 104.

<sup>2</sup> *Va. Hist. Soc.*

Apparently, these two cases were associated with another legal proceeding in which Robert Carrington sought to secure an outlet from his estate over a tract of land adjacent to the Roanoke estate which Randolph had recently purchased. Under an order of the County Court of Charlotte County, Dennis E. Morgan, Captain Fowlkes, and W. B. Green were directed to view the road, over which Carrington desired to pass, and to report to the Court. When they inspected it, they found pasted up on a gate-post on it a large sheet of foolscap, giving notice that all persons, whose names were written on the sheet, were permitted to use the road as formerly. The paper was filled from top to bottom with names, male and female, and the viewers read it over carefully to see if the name of anyone in the neighborhood, male or female, who had used the road, or who might probably wish to do so, had been omitted; and it was found that the only omission was that of the name of Robert Carrington. The Commissioners reported that the land, over which the road ran, was exceedingly poor and of little value; that the road had been in constant use as a mill and neighborhood road for about 50 years, and that its use had been interdicted to Robert Carrington alone.<sup>1</sup>

It is said that, while the viewers were on the ground, Randolph, true to the policy which has always been pursued by corporations in condemnation cases under similar circumstances, had a quantity of provisions brought to the scene of the inquisition by his servants. He is also said to have presented his case against the use of the road by Carrington in a long speech, in which he abused the whole Carrington family; a fact which hardly harmonizes with the idea that he was any more afraid of Robert Carrington than of anybody else.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the argument, to use Randolph's own figure of speech, "tickled under the tail" so acutely that Carrington would have attempted a reply

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 89.

had not a cool-headed friend persuaded him that it was not in speaking that he could hope to contend successfully with Randolph. Perhaps, it was this advice which impelled him (as it is said) to address a short note to Randolph forbidding him to use the river road, and telling him flatly that, if he did so, he would shoot him; a letter which provoked a reply from Randolph that is said to have caused Robert Carrington to tell Judge F. N. Watkins of Prince Edward County that Randolph had sent him four pages of foolscap, very severe in character and as brilliant as anything that Randolph had ever written.<sup>1</sup>

Much of the oral evidence relating to this controversy should, we have no doubt, be accepted very cautiously; but, while we are recalling such evidence, we might add that the strife over the right-of-way which Carrington sought could not have been as vicious as has been supposed, because it is said that, when Dr. Isaac Read, of Charlotte County, was moved by a generous impulse to approach both Carrington and Randolph, in the hope of composing the quarrel between them, Carrington declared that, if the difficulty could be honorably adjusted, he would have no objection; and Randolph not only said that he was willing with all his soul, but delivered a lecture on the magnanimity of forgiving an enemy which Dr. Read thought equalled old Dr. Hoge in his best days.<sup>2</sup> (a)

There was undeniably an understrain of ill-feeling in the intercourse between Randolph and the Carringtons of Charlotte County generally, which began, doubtless, with the fling at the integrity of the elder Judge Paul Carrington in the will of the elder John Randolph; and this fact, we suspect, had not a little to do with the censorious feeling towards Randolph which prompted Henry Carrington, of Ingleside, to say that Randolph did things which nobody else could do, and made others do things which they never did before, and of which they repented

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Bryan MSS.

all the days of their lives, and that on some occasions Randolph was totally regardless of private rights, and yet was not held amenable to the laws of the land.<sup>1</sup> Not only did the elder Paul Carrington chuckle over the fact that he was seated between Randolph's Middle Quarter and Lower Quarter in such a way that he could help himself to the Randolph lands on either side of him, but, when Robert Carrington emigrated from Virginia to Arkansas, Randolph, who had the appetite of an earth-worm for land, and was very desirous of buying the Carrington estate and getting rid of such a dangerous table companion as the Carrington family, was thwarted in his purpose by Col. Clem Carrington, another son of the elder Judge Paul Carrington, who purchased the estate himself.<sup>2</sup> There are slight circumstances evidencing the fact that the regard in which the younger Judge Paul Carrington was held by Randolph was by no means enthusiastic. In the Diary, is pasted an obituary eulogy of the former which Randolph had clipped from some newspaper, and, beside its words of glowing panegyric, are these words written by Randolph: "Galimatias—Phebus—fustian—bombast—bathos." And Randolph had an even better reason for harboring a grudge against old Col. Clem Carrington, the son of the elder Judge Paul Carrington, than the fact that he was a Federalist, because the Diary contains this memorandum too: "Juno, my double-nosed Spanish slut, killed by Col. Carrington's order. He had her head chopped off. Her puppy escaped. She had done no mischief and attempted none; she was not even in his enclosures." The date of this occurrence seems to have been Oct. 5, 1811.<sup>3</sup>

But the Diary and Randolph's briefer journals show that, between the year 1810, when Randolph removed from Bizarre to Roanoke, until the very last years of his life, he was on neighborly terms, on the whole, with all the members of the Carrington connection in Charlotte

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 130.

<sup>2</sup> Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

County; visiting them and being visited by them, dining them and being dined by them, and keeping up with, if he did not cordially share, their family joys and sorrows. Nothing could be more decisive on this subject than the statement of John Randolph Bryan: "Mr. Randolph had a difficulty with Robert about the road referred to in the *Reminiscences* (Bouldin's), I think about 1832; but he never felt unfriendly towards either Mr. Robert or old Col. Clem."<sup>1</sup> We are told that, even after the road controversy, Randolph voted for Robert Carrington, when he was a candidate for the House of Delegates and, when Randolph died, he left behind him a list of his friends which included the name of Robert Carrington,<sup>2</sup> with some favorable comments on his courage, honor, and manliness.<sup>3</sup> (a)

According to Jacob Harvey, Randolph said, after his rub with his Dutch fellow-passenger on *The Amity*: "God forgive me for being passionate; but you must know that I am like a hair trigger and go off at half-cock."<sup>4</sup> The judgment was just, as Randolph's judgments about himself were apt to be. Nor can there be any doubt that Randolph's temper was not only very choleric, but also fickle and capricious, and quick to veer from gayety and good humor to melancholy and moroseness. Harvey tells us that one day he would be "full of jokes, repartee, and good humor; the next abstracted, morose, and incommunicative."<sup>5</sup>

From Harvey too we derive a story which is but typical of the many stories that were circulated during Randolph's life about his abrupt transitions from one mood to another. A gentleman who had been introduced to him at a dinner party at Washington, when he was in fine spirits, found him so cordial and attractive that the next day, when he

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Mr. Robertson, Mar. 27, 1878, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 99, 263.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, 263.

<sup>4</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 332.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*, v. 2, 70.



was walking towards the Capitol and observed Randolph ahead of him, he quickened his pace until he came up with him, when he exclaimed, puffing away for want of breath:

"Good morning, Mr. Randolph; how do you do, Sir!"

"Good morning, Sir," replied Randolph rather stiffly and without stopping.

"You walk very fast, Sir," said the gentleman, "I have had great difficulty in overtaking you."

"I'll increase the difficulty, Sir," replied Randolph; and, suiting the action to the word, he soon left his bewildered acquaintance behind him.<sup>1</sup>

A better known story is that of the man who remarked to Randolph when the latter was in one of his crusty humors: "I passed by your house this morning, Mr. Randolph"; and received from him the stunning reply: "I hope that you will always continue to do so."<sup>2</sup>

Still other stories of the same kind could be cited by us, but most of them have but slight claims to authenticity. This cannot be said, however, of cases where his bile is known to have been stirred by some nettling circumstance or some real appeal to his disapprobation or contempt. He had a marked disrelish for any topic of conversation that was forced upon him.<sup>3</sup> He resented, too, any effort to obtain information from him when the object of the application was not frankly disclosed. In other words, to modify his own image a little, what are but pricks with most of us became pimples with him, owing to his morbid sensibility to external impressions.

Two well-authenticated stories have come down to our time of the absolutely withering glance that he could bring

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 70.

<sup>2</sup> Essay on John Randolph by the Author, *Va. University Mag.*, Oct., 1879.

<sup>3</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 391.



to bear upon conceit or shallow pretensions; or, to use his own phrase, "a frog at the utmost degree of distention."<sup>1</sup> The first of the two is related by the Rev. John S. Kirkpatrick in such a vivacious way that we shall tell it entirely in his own words:

"There lived years ago, in Campbell County, a man who bore, and seemed to be proud that he was entitled to bear, the euphonious and far-resounding name of Achilles D. Johnson. I had some acquaintance with him, which prepared me to appreciate what I am about to relate, as others may do. With no claim to such distinction, that others could see, he yet aspired to political honors. He was ambitious to get into the Legislature. He may have dreamed, also, of a seat in Congress, but, if so, I do not know that he ever told his dream. Being one day at Raines' Tavern, a noted stage-coach stand in Cumberland County, on the great dirt road thoroughfare between Washington City and a large portion of the South, he learned, much to his joy, that Mr. Randolph was hourly expected to reach that point, on his way home from Washington; traveling in his private carriage from Fredericksburg, whither it had been sent some days before to meet him. He thought—our aspiring friend—that, if he should be able, on his return to Campbell, to report to his neighbors and fellow-countrymen that he had conversed with Mr. Randolph on national affairs, and that the latter had told him this, that, and what else might be, it would considerably swell his importance, in their eyes, and brighten his prospects for getting into the Legislature. How to bring himself into communication with Mr. Randolph, was the problem now to be solved. He sought the mediation of Mr. Raines, the proprietor, but he declined the service, nor was anyone of several other gentlemen present willing to undertake the delicate office. Meanwhile, Mr. Randolph's carriage halted before the door of the tavern, and tarried long enough for an order for hot water to be executed; Mr. Randolph finding it necessary to compound a fresh potation of the inevitable medicine. It was now or never, with our friend from Campbell. He advanced, whether boldly or tremblingly,

<sup>1</sup> J. R. to Dr. Brockenbrough, Feb. 26, 1827, *Garl.*, v. 2, 288.

I cannot say, but alone, and unsupported, to the door of the carriage. 'This is Mr. Randolph, I suppose.' 'Yes, sir, that is my name.' 'My name is Achilles D. Johnson, of Campbell County.' 'Howdye do, Mr. Achilles D. Johnson, of Campbell County!' This was a shot that would have discomfited a man of ordinary courage, but not our hero. It was aimed too high, and struck the head, an invulnerable part of our Modern Achilles, as of his illustrious prototype whose name he bore. He returned fearlessly to the charge. 'You have recently come from Washington, Mr. Randolph.' 'Yes, sir, but more recently from Fredericksburg.' This time, the bolt, slanting downward, struck the undipped heel, and Achilles retired, limping and sulking from the field."<sup>1</sup>

The other of the two stories was imparted to Powhatan Bouldin by Mr. Wm. M. Mosely, of Danville, Va., who was present when the incident, out of which it arose, occurred. A vain young popinjay, of the Buckingham County bar, had been elected to the Virginia Assembly, where he had gained some notoriety by a speech which he had made in favor of the abolition of slavery, in the course of which he had held up Randolph as a cruel slaveholder; a very dangerous thing for anyone to do who aspired to popular approval in Randolph's District. At the next election, his constituents declined to re-elect him. Nothing daunted by this result, he availed himself of the last occasion on which Randolph ever addressed the people of Buckingham County to make public amends for his course in the Legislature and to apologize to Randolph for the supposed injury that he had done him. He began by expressing his deep sympathy for the honorable gentleman in his very infirm state of health, and the hope that Randolph's prospective visit to Europe would result in its restoration. He had always been a devoted admirer of Mr. Randolph, he said, and felt that it was due to that distinguished gentleman, as well as to the speaker and his

<sup>1</sup> Personal Recollections of J. R. of Roanoke, MSS.

fellow-citizens of Buckingham, that he should embrace the present opportunity for recanting the speech delivered by him, when he had been honored with a seat in the State Legislature, in which he had spoken disparagingly of Mr. Randolph as a tyrannical master to his slaves. He had reason to know that his conduct in this respect did not accord with the sentiments of his constituents; and he had to confess that his personal attack upon his distinguished friend had been made without any personal knowledge of what sort of master Mr. Randolph actually was. He trusted that his constituents would forgive him, and he relied upon the well-known magnanimity of Mr. Randolph for the forgiveness, too, of a wrong done him, in a moment of heated debate, upon an exciting subject; the right side of which he now saw that he had not espoused. From this point we might as well tell the story in Mr. Moseley's very words:

“During the delivery of this ill-timed speech, Mr. Randolph sat with his head resting upon his hand, seemingly absorbed in deep thought; and, at its conclusion, he straightened himself up, and, fixing upon his victim a penetrating gaze, he proceeded as follows: ‘I don't know you, Sir; what might be your name?’ The name was given, when Mr. Randolph continued his interrogatories: ‘Whose son are you? where did you make the speech you have been talking about? and what did you say you were trying to speak about?’

“These questions were all answered in a hurried and confused manner, evidently showing that the young orator's situation was becoming unpleasant. Mr. Randolph, after asking a few more simple questions, the purport of which is not now remembered, concluded as follows: ‘I don't think I ever heard of you or your speech before; and, of course, I have no particular comment to make upon either. I knew your father, and have always thought he was a right good sort of a man; and I suppose you are a degenerate son of a noble sire—a thing that is becoming quite common in this country. I hope my old constituents, God bless them, will never again be *misrepre-*

sented in the Legislature, or anywhere else, by such a creature as you have shown yourself to be.'"<sup>1</sup>

The mercurial nature of Randolph's temper is also attested by a witness of unquestionable credit, the Rev. Wm. S. Lacy, who conducted a school at Ararat, in Prince Edward County. Speaking of a visit paid by Randolph to this school, he says:

"On one occasion only do I remember his being gloomy and morose and crabbed, and then it was bad enough. Shortly after he arrived at Ararat on that visit, a long spell of cold, rainy weather set in. The wind blowing from Northeast kept him in-doors for a week or more. He would read, and write and loll on the couch, till he was tired and then become the most restless and fretful mortal I ever saw. From one o'clock till bedtime, he would drink rum toddy and whiskey grog enough to make any other man dead drunk, though he was never at all fuddled. All we could do was to keep out of his way and let him alone. As soon, however, as the wind changed, and the weather cleared off, he was as gay and lively as ever."<sup>2</sup>

But worse still, Randolph's temper sometimes assumed the character of settled, chronic animosity. In his boyhood, he was passionately (for no other word is strong enough to convey the idea) attached to his stepfather, Judge St. George Tucker. "God bless you my father, my ever beloved friend. Whilst this heart has motion, it shall ever feel for you the liveliest affection," was the way in which he concluded a letter to Judge Tucker when he was about 23 years old.<sup>3</sup> And this was the tone to which his letters to Judge Tucker were habitually attuned until the year 1805, when they began to be less effusive.

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 162.

<sup>2</sup> "Early Recollections of J. R.," *Sou. Lit. Mess.*, June, 1859, pp. 461-466.

<sup>3</sup> *Circa*, July 18, 1796. Lucas MSS.

From that time on, they were increasingly dry and formal, until the final test of strength between Monroe and his rival, Madison, of whom Judge Tucker was an adherent, as Presidential candidates, brought all really cordial intercourse between Randolph and his stepfather to an end. In 1803, the reverence and affection, cherished by Randolph for Judge Tucker, were so strong that, when the character of the latter was slanderously defamed, Randolph wrote to his stepbrother, Henry St. George Tucker, in these madcap words:

“Can the character of St. George Tucker be sullied by the breath of this man? I would not have you fail of what you owe to that honor which we both equally worship—to that friend whom we equally revere. Such an accusation can redound only to his honor. It will call forth the indignation of every honest man in the community, and draw forth a marked expression of the public confidence in his unsullied integrity. If the ruffian is to be offered up a victim to filial piety, remember he is my prey, and, to touch the assassin, is to rob me of my birthright.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1810-11, Randolph's feelings towards Judge Tucker had become so acrid that he took legal advice with a view to bringing suit against him, and was with difficulty dissuaded from doing so.<sup>2</sup> His claim was that Judge Tucker had contrived “to take to himself” the profits of his and his brother Richard's estates during their respective infancy, while Judge Tucker was their guardian, and that, moreover, his grandfather, Theodorick Bland, had given his mother certain slaves at the time of her marriage to his father; that his father had held these slaves until his death; and that, at his death, they were inventoried as a part of his estate, and were considered such during his wife's widowhood<sup>3</sup>; but that Judge Tucker had contrived to

<sup>1</sup> *Richm. Enq.*, Sept. 10, 1833.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 38.

<sup>3</sup> Deposition of Wm. Leigh in *Coalter's Ex. vs. Randolph's Ex.*, Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

obtain a deed of them from Theodorick Bland and had sold them and their progeny.

In his letter to the *Richmond Enquirer*, of Sept. 10, 1833, Judge Henry St. George Tucker, with a temper as irreproachably loyal to the memory of his half-brother as to that of his father, affirmed that, shortly after the death of Richard Randolph, Judge St. George Tucker stated his accounts between Richard Randolph and John Randolph respectively and himself, showing a balance in his hands to the credit of each of them of £200; and that he gave his bonds for these balances to John Randolph and Judith Randolph, as the executrix of Richard Randolph respectively; taking a release from each of them; and that afterwards he paid the amounts of both bonds to them.

“No hint of dissatisfaction,” said Judge Tucker, “appears in the whole transaction. Indeed, in 1799, Mr. Randolph, being in Richmond, applied to Mr. Tucker for a loan, which was made without a moment’s hesitation to the amount of \$2500.00; and receipt given, to which Randolph, of his own accord, added a scroll as his seal.” (a)

As John Randolph was 23 years of age, when he gave Judge Tucker the release, and continued for many years afterwards to be on the most affectionate terms with him, it would be even idler at this late date, than it would have been in 1833, to attempt to go back of the release; which there is no reason to believe was not based upon a perfectly full and fair statement of accounts.

So far as the deed of gift of the slaves to Judge Tucker was concerned, the facts appear to have been these: In 1758, a statute was passed by the Colonial Assembly of Virginia making parol gifts of slaves void. Theodorick Bland evidently availed himself of this statute, after the death of his daughter, Mrs. John Randolph, to reclaim control of the slaves, which he had given or lent to her, and which, if they had been given by a deed of gift, in

compliance with the requirements of the Act of 1758, would, under the hard rule of law that then existed, have become the absolute property of her husband, John Randolph, Sr. Indeed, it may well be that he did not transfer them by a deed of gift because he wished to reserve the right to reclaim them at pleasure. (a) The children of Mrs. Randolph by her first husband were abundantly provided for, and the object of Theodorick Bland in executing the deed of gift to Judge Tucker was, doubtless, to make a provision for Mrs. Randolph and her second set of children. Be this as it may, there is no evidence whatever that Judge Tucker employed any improper means to obtain the deed, and, moreover, to infer that he did would be to ignore the excellent reputation that he enjoyed for integrity during his life and left behind him at his death. The only explanation that Henry St. George Tucker could offer for Randolph's idea that Judge Tucker had abused his trust as his guardian was that "from some other cause, he had become greatly offended with Mr. Tucker, and from the influence of these unfriendly feelings labored under a mental hallucination on this subject; as it was his misfortune to have done on some others."<sup>1</sup>

The original cause assigned by Garland for Randolph's alienation from his stepfather is stated in these words:

"The first cause of this misunderstanding with his stepfather is very characteristic of the man, and illustrates the feeling of family pride that burned so intensely in his breast. The subject of conversation was the passing of the Banister estate from an infant of the family to a brother of the half-blood of the Shippen family. Mr. Randolph said that occurrence gave rise to the alteration of the law of descents, and placed it on its present footing; he also expressed in strong terms his disapprobation of the justice or policy of such a law. Judge Tucker replied: 'Why, Jack, you ought not to be against that law; for you know, if you were to die without issue, you

<sup>1</sup> *Richm. Enq.*, Sept. 10, 1833.



would wish your half-brothers to have your estate.' 'I'll be damned, Sir, if I do know it,' said Randolph in great excitement. And from that day ceased with his good and venerable stepfather all friendly intercourse. This occasion gave rise to many cruel and unjust suspicions. Once brought to suspect a selfish motive in him he had so much venerated, he began to look back with a jealous eye on all his past transactions, and 'trifles light as air' became confirmations strong as Holy Writ."<sup>1</sup>

In our judgment, as we have intimated, it is much more likely that it was the differences engendered by the Presidential struggle between Madison and Monroe, in which Randolph's heart was so zealously enlisted, that first turned Randolph against Judge Tucker. In the winter of 1813-14, when he spent some months in Richmond, an effort was made by the common friends of his stepfather and himself to bring about a reconciliation between them; but the effort failed. In a letter to the widow of Judge St. George Tucker, written after Randolph's death, Mrs. John Randolph Bryan recalled the fact that Judge St. George Tucker and Randolph had met at Bush Hill near Richmond about 1816 or 1817 and that Randolph had refused to take Judge Tucker's hand; Judge Tucker saying in an agitated voice, like the good, affectionate man that he was: "Oh, Jack! I never thought that one of my children would refuse my hand."<sup>2</sup>

A few years later, Randolph inserted in the will which he executed in 1821 these extraordinary words:

"I have not included my mother's descendants in my will because her husband, besides the whole profits of my late father's estate, during the minority of my brother and myself, has contrived to get to himself the slaves given by my grandfather, Bland, as her marriage portion when my father married her; which slaves were inventoried at my father's death as part of his estate, and were as much his as any that he had.

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 38.

<sup>2</sup> Bryan MSS.



One-half of them, now scattered from Maryland to Mississippi, were entitled to freedom at my brother Richard's death, as the other would have been at mine."<sup>1</sup>

This was but the breaking of a boil which had long been coming to a head.

In the Diary, Randolph preserved a list of all the negroes to whom he thought that the estate of his father was entitled; and along with their names he also entered in the Diary several fixtures which he deemed Judge Tucker to have unwarrantably removed from Matoax to Williamsburg after the death of his first wife.

In a list which he kept in the Diary of his books, that were destroyed with the mansion house at Bizarre on Sunday, March 21, 1813, is this title: "Tucker's Blackstone, 4 vols. from the editor," with these splenetic words, evidently appended to it at a date later than its insertion: "With his profits."

Naturally enough, the reflections in the will of 1821 on Judge Tucker were warmly resented by the Tuckers; but of this we shall speak in a later connection.

Never, however, was the gall in Randolph's nature so stirred as by the feelings which he came to cherish towards Nancy Randolph, after the truth about the tragic incident at Glenlyvar had been brought to his knowledge by a confession which she made to him some years after it had occurred. Speaking of his brother Richard, in a letter written from Paris on July 24, 1824, he said:

"His sudden and untimely death threw upon my care, helpless as I was, his family whom I tenderly and passionately loved; and with whom I might be now living at Bizarre if the reunion of his widow with the —— of her husband had not driven me to Roanoke; where, but for my brother's entreaty and forlorn and friendless condition, I should have remained; and where I should have obtained a release from my bondage

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 204.

more than 20 years ago. Then I might have enjoyed my present opportunities; but time misspent and faculties mis-employed and senses, jaded by labor or impaired by excess, cannot be recalled any more than that freshness of the heart before it has become aware of the deceits of others and of its own."<sup>1</sup>

But before these bitter, mournful, musical words were written, there had been an interchange of letters between Randolph and Nancy Randolph that can be compared only to the deadly grapple in midair, with beak and claw, of two fierce falcons.

On his way from Harvard, where he was a student, to Virginia, in the year 1814, Tudor Randolph was taken with a hemorrhage at Morrisania, in the State of New York, the home of Gouverneur Morris, to whom Nancy Randolph had been recently married. (a) When knowledge of this fact reached Judith Randolph, who had in the meantime become reconciled to her sister after a period of estrangement, she went on to Morrisania herself to look after Tudor; and was followed by Randolph. He reached New York on Thursday, Oct. 20, and Morrisania on Saturday, Oct. 22, and the next day he returned to New York.<sup>2</sup> He seems, therefore, to have spent but a single night at Morrisania before he left New York on his return to Virginia. While writhing under the physical effects of the accident, which we have already mentioned as befalling him there, and, with a mind poisoned by aspersions on the conduct of Mrs. Morris, which he had heard from an enemy or enemies of hers after his return to New York, he wrote to her the following letter; and evoked from her the following reply,<sup>3</sup> which, however, was never received by Randolph.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 224.

<sup>2</sup> J. R.'s Diary,

<sup>3</sup> N. Y. Pub. Libr. MSS., Va. Hist. Soc. MSS

<sup>4</sup> Letter from J. R. to Wm. B. Giles, Clay Hill, Mar. 12, 1815, N. Y. Pub. Libr.

GREENWICH ST., Oct. 31, 1814.

"MADAM:

When, at my departure from Morrisania, in your sister's presence, I bade you remember the past, I was not apprised of the whole extent of your guilty machinations. I had nevertheless seen and heard enough in the course of my short visit to satisfy me that your own dear experience had availed nothing toward the amendment of your life. My object was to let you know that the eye of man as well as of that God, of whom you seek not, was upon you—to impress upon your mind some of your duty towards your husband, and, if possible, to rouse some dormant spark of virtue, if haply any such should slumber in your bosom. The conscience of the most hardened criminal has, by a sudden stroke, been alarmed into repentance and contrition. Yours, I perceive, is not made of penetrable stuff. Unhappy woman, why will you tempt the forbearance of that Maker who has, perhaps, permitted you to run your course of vice and sin that you might feel it to be a life of wretchedness, alarm and suspicion? You now live in the daily and nightly dread of discovery. Detection itself can hardly be worse. Some of the proofs of your guilt, (you know to which of them I allude); those which in despair you sent me through Dr. Meade on your leaving Virginia; those proofs, I say, had not been produced against you had you not falsely used my name in imposing upon the generous man to whose arms you have brought pollution! to whom next to my unfortunate brother you were most indebted, and whom next to him you have most deeply injured. You told Mr. Morris that I had offered you marriage subsequent to your arraignment for the most horrible of crimes, when you were conscious that I never at any time made such proposals. You have, therefore, released me from any implied obligation, (with me it would have been sacred; notwithstanding you laid no injunction of the sort upon me, provided you had respected my name and decently discharged your duties to your husband) to withhold the papers from the inspection of all except my own family.

"I laid them before Tudor soon after they came into my hands with the whole story of his father's wrongs and your crime. But to return:

“You represented to Mr. Morris that I had offered you marriage. Your inveterate disregard of truth has been too well known to me for many years to cause any surprise on my part at this or any other falsehood that you may coin to serve a turn. In like manner, you instigated Mr. Morris against the Chief Justice whom you knew to have been misled with respect to the transactions at R. Harrisons, and who knew no more of your general or subsequent life than the Archbishop of Canterbury. Cunning and guilt are no match for wisdom and truth, yet you persevere in your wicked course. Your apprehensions for the life of your child first flashed conviction on my mind that your hands had deprived of life that of which you were delivered in October, 1792, at R. Harrison’s. The child, to interest his feelings in its behalf, you told my brother Richard (when you entrusted to him the secret of your pregnancy and implored him to hide your shame) was begotten by my brother, Theodorick, who died at Bizarre of a long decline the preceding February. You knew long before his death (nearly a year) he was reduced to a mere skeleton; that he was unable to walk; and that his bones had worn through his skin. Such was the inviting object whose bed (agreeably to your own account) you sought, and with whom, to use your own paraphrase, you played ‘Alonzo and Cora,’ and, to screen the character of such a creature, was the life and fame of this most gallant of men put in jeopardy. He passed his word, and the pledge was redeemed at the hazard of all that man can hold dear. Domestic peace, reputation and life, all suffered but the last. His hands received the burthen, bloody from the womb, and already lifeless. Who stifled its cries, God only knows and you. His hands consigned it to an uncoffined grave. To the prudence of R. Harrison, who disqualified himself from giving testimony by refraining from a search under the pile of shingles, some of which were marked with blood—to this cautious conduct it is owing that my brother Richard did not perish on the same gibbet by your side, and that the foul stain of incest and murder is not indelibly stamped on his memory and associated with the idea of his offspring. Your alleged reason for not declaring the truth (fear of your brothers) does not hold against a disclosure to his

wife, your sister, to whom he was not allowed to impart the secret.

“But her own observation supplied all defect of positive information and, had you been first proceeded against at law, your sister being a competent witness, you must have been convicted, and the conviction of her husband would have followed as a necessary consequence; for who would have believed your sister to have been sincere in her declaration that she suspected no criminal intercourse between her husband and yourself?

“When, some years ago, I imparted to her the facts (she had a right to know them), she expressed no surprise but only said, she was always satisfied in her own mind that it was so. My brother died *suddenly* in June, 1790, only three years after his trial. I was from home. Tudor, because he believes you capable of anything, imparted to me the morning I left Morrisania his misgivings that you had been the perpetrator of that act, and, when I found your mind running upon poisonings and murders, I too had my former suspicions strengthened. If I am wrong, I ask forgiveness of God and even of you. A dose of medicine was the avowed cause of his death. Mrs. Dudley, to whom my brother had offered an asylum in his house, who descended from our mother's sister, you drove away. Your quarrels with your own sister, before fierce and angry, now knew no remission. You tried to force her to turn you out of doors that you might have some plausible reason to assign for quitting Bizarre. But, after what my poor brother had been made to suffer, in mind, body and estate, after her own suffering as wife and widow from your machinations, it was not worth while to try to save anything from the wreck of her happiness, and she endured you as well as she could, and you poured on. But your intimacy with one of the slaves, *your* ‘*dear* Billy Ellis,’ thus you commenced your epistles to this Othello!, attracted notice. You could stay no longer at Bizarre, you abandoned it under the plea of ill usage and, after various shiftings of your quarters, you threw yourself on the humanity of Capt. and Mrs. Murray (never appealed to in vain), and here you made a bold stroke for a husband—Dr. Meade. Foiled in this game, your advances became so

immodest you had to leave Grovebrook. You, afterwards, took lodgings at Prior's (a public garden), whither I sent by your sister's request, and in her name \$100. You returned them by the bearer, Tudor, then a schoolboy, because sent in her name which you covered with obloquy. But to S. G. Tucker, Esq., you represented that I had sent the money, suppressing your sister's name, and he asked me if I was not going to see 'poor Nancy'? You sent this, a direct message, and I went. You were at that time fastidiously neat, and so was the apartment. I *now* see *why* the bank note was returned—but the bait did not take—I left the apartment and never beheld you more until in Washington as the wife of Mr. Morris. Your subsequent association with the players—your decline into a very *drab*—I was informed of by a friend in Richmond. You left Virginia—whether made a condition of your — or not, I know not, but the Grantor would not, as I heard, suffer you to associate with his wife. From Rhode Island, you wrote to me, begging for money. I did not answer your letter. Mr. Sturgis, of Connecticut, with whom you had formed an acquaintance, and with whom you corresponded! often brought me messages from you. He knows how coolly they were received. When Mr. Morris brought you to Washington, he knew that I held aloof from you. At his instance, who asked me if I intended to mortify his wife by not visiting her, I went. I repeated my visit to ascertain whether change of circumstances had made any change in your conduct. I was led to hope you had seen your errors and was smoothing his passage through life. A knowledge that he held the staff in his own hands and a mistaken idea of his character (for I had not done justice to the kindness of his nature) fortified this hope. Let me say that, when I heard of your living with Mr. Morris as his *housekeeper*, I was glad of it as a means of keeping you from worse company and courses. Considering him as a perfect man of the world, who, in courts and cities at home and abroad, had in vain been assailed by female blandishments, the idea of his marrying you never entered my head. Another connection did. My first intimation of the marriage was its announcement in the newspapers. I then thought, Mr. Morris being a travelled man, might have formed

his taste on a foreign model. Silence was my only course. Chance has again thrown you under my eye. What do I see? A vampire that, after sucking the best blood of my race, has flitted off to the North, and struck her harpy fangs into an infirm old man. To what condition of being have you reduced him? Have you made him a prisoner in his own house that there may be no witness of your lewd amours, or have you driven away his friends and old domestics that there may be no witnesses of his death? Or do you mean to force him to Europe where he will be more at your mercy, and, dropping the boy on the highway, rid yourself of all incumbrances at once? 'Uncle,' said Tudor, 'if ever Mr. Morris' eyes are opened, it will be through this child whom, with all her grimaces in her husband's presence, 'tis easy to see she cares nothing for except as an instrument of power. How shocking she looks! I have not met her eyes three times since I have been in the house. My first impression of her character, as far back as I can remember, is that she was an unchaste woman. My brother knew her even better than I. She could never do anything with him.'

"I have done. Before this reaches your eye, it will have been perused by him, to whom, next to my brother, you are most deeply indebted, and whom, next to him, you have most deeply wronged. If he be not both blind and deaf, he must sooner or later unmask you unless *he too die of cramps in his stomach*. You understand me. If I were persuaded that his life is safe in your custody, I might forbear from making this communication to him. Repent before it is too late. May I hear of that repentance and never see you more.

"JOHN RANDOLPH of ROANOKE."

"MORRISANIA, January 16th, 1815.

"SIR:

"My husband yesterday communicated to me for the first time your letter of the last of October, together with that which accompanied it, directed to him.

"In your letter to my husband, you say, 'I wish I could withhold the blow but I must in your case do what under a change of circumstances I would have you do unto me.' This



Sir, seems fair and friendly. It seems, Sir, as if you wished to apprise Mr. Morris and him only of circumstances important to his happiness and honor, though fatal to my reputation, leaving it in his power to cover them in oblivion or display them to the world as the means of freeing him from a monster unfit to live. But this was mere seeming. Your real object was widely different. Under the pretext of consulting Com. Decatur and Mr. Bleecker, you communicated your slanders to them, and then to Mr. Ogden. You afterwards displayed them to Mr. Wilkins, who, having heard them spoken of in the city, called on you to know on what foundation they stood. How many others you may have consulted, to how many others you may have published your malicious tale, I know not, but I venture to ask whether this be conduct under a change of circumstances you would have others pursue towards you? You have professed a sense of gratitude for obligations you suppose my husband to have laid you under. Was the attempt to blacken my character and destroy his peace of mind a fair return? There are many other questions which will occur to candid minds on the perusal of your letter. For instance, did *you* believe these slanders? If you did, why did you permit your nephew to be fed from my bounty and nursed by my care during nearly three months? Could you suppose him safe in the power of a wretch who had murdered his father? Does it consist with the dignified pride of family you affect to have him, whom you announce as your heir, and destined to support your name, dependent on the charity of a negro's concubine? You say I confine my husband a prisoner in his house that there may be no witnesses of my lewd amours, and have driven away his friends and old domestics that there may be no witnesses of his death. If I wished to indulge in amours, the natural course would be to mingle in the pleasures and amusements of the city, or at least to induce my husband to go abroad and leave me a clear stage for such misdeeds. Was it with a view to multiply witnesses of my ill conduct that you published tales tending as far as they are believed to make his house a solitude? It cannot escape your observation that you take on you to assert things which, had they existed, you could not know. Thus you say your brother 'passed his



word and the pledge was redeemed at the hazard of all that a man can hold dear'! Pray, Sir, admitting (tho it is not true) that I had exacted from your brother a promise of secrecy, how could you have known it unless he betrayed it? and, if he betrayed it, how was the pledge redeemed? Again you say that 'I instigated Mr. Morris to write to the Chief Justice whom I knew to have been misled.' Had the instigation been a fact, how could you come by the knowledge of it? Like many other things in your letter, it happens to be a downright falsehood, and is, therefore, a just standard for him to estimate the rest of your assertions. Permit me to observe also that it is an additional proof of your intention to spread your slander abroad!; for, had you meant to communicate information to Mr. Morris, you would not have hazarded such a charge. People of proper feelings require that the evidence of accusation be strong in proportion as the guilt is enormous; but those, who feel themselves capable of committing the blackest crimes, will readily suspect others, and condemn without proof on a mere hearsay, on the suggestion of a disturbed fancy or instigations of a malevolent heart. Those who possess a clear conscience and sound mind, will look through your letter for some *proof* of my guilt. They will look in vain. They will find, indeed, that you have thought proper to found suspicions on suspicions of your nephew, and, with no better evidence, you have the insolence to impute crime at which nature revolts. You will perhaps say that you mention a piece of evidence in your possession—a letter which I wrote on leaving Virginia. As far as that goes, it must be admitted, but permit me to tell you that the very mention of it destroys your credibility with honorable minds. To say, as you do, that I laid no injunction of secrecy will strike such minds as a pitiful evasion. If you had the feelings of a man of honor, you would have known that there are things the communication of which involves that injunction. You have heard of principle and pretend to justify the breach of confidence by my want of respect for your name. But you acknowledge that you communicated the information to my sister and her son Tudor (this a boy of eleven years old) shortly after you became possessed of it. Thus was my reputation, as far as it lay in your power, com-

mitted to the discretion of a woman and a child many years before the imputed want of respect for your name! Formerly Jack Randolph—now, ‘John Randolph of Roanoke.’ It was then a want of respect to the great John Randolph of Roanoke to say he had done the honor of offering his hand to his poor cousin Nancy. I shall take more notice of this in its proper place, and only add here that among the respectable people of Virginia the affectation of greatness must cover you with ridicule.

“ But, to return to this breach of confidence, without which you have not the shadow of evidence to support your slanders. While on the chapter of self-contradictions, (which, with all due respect to ‘John Randolph of Roanoke,’ make up the history of his life) I must notice a piece of evidence not indeed contained in your letter, but written by your hand. I have already hinted at the indelicacy of leaving your nephew so long in my care with the view of meeting observations which no person can fail to make on a conduct so extraordinary in itself and inconsistent with your charges against me. You pretend to have discovered, all at once in this house, the confirmation of your suspicions, but surely the suspicion was sufficient to prevent a person having a pretense to delicacy from subjecting himself to such obligations. One word, however, as to this sudden discovery made by your great sagacity. Recollect, Sir, when you rose from table to leave Morrisania, you put in my husband’s hand a note to my sister expressing your willingness that she and her son should pass the winter in his house. Surely, the discovery must have been made at that time, if at all. You will recollect, too, some other marks of confidence and affection, let me add of respect also, which I forbear to mention because you would no doubt deny them, and it would be invidious to ask the testimony of those who were present. One act, however, must not be unnoticed. It speaks too plain a language to be misunderstood, and was too notorious to be denied. When you entered this house, and when you left it, you took me in your arms, you pressed me to your bosom, you impressed upon my lips a kiss which I received as a token of friendship from a near relation. Did you then believe that you held in your arms, that you pressed to your bosom, that you

kissed the lips of, a common prostitute, the murderess of her own child and of your brother? Go, tell this to the world that scorn may be at no loss for an object. If you did not believe it, make out a certificate that 'John Randolph of Roanoke' is a base calumniator. But no, you may spare yourself this trouble. It is already written. It lies before me, and I proceed to notice what it contains in a more particular manner.

"And first, Sir, as to the fact communicated shortly before I left Virginia. That your brother Theodoric paid his addresses to me, you knew and attempted to supplant him by calumny. Be pleased to remember that, in my sister Mary's house, (*a*) you led me to the portico, and, leaning against one of the pillars, expressed your surprise at having heard from your brother Richard that I was engaged to marry his brother, Theodoric. That you hoped it was not true, for he was unworthy of me. To establish this opinion, you made many assertions derogatory to his reputation—some of which I knew to be false. Recollect that, afterwards, on one of those occasions (not infrequent), when your violence of temper had led you into an unpleasant situation, you, in a letter to your brother, Richard, declared you were unconscious of ever having done anything in all your life which could offend me, unless it was that conversation, excusing it as an act of heroism, like the sacrifice of his own son by Brutus, for which I ought to applaud you. The defamation of your brother whom I loved, your stormy passions, your mean selfishness, your wretched appearance, rendered your attentions disagreeable. Your brother, Richard, a model of truth and honor, knew how much I was annoyed by them. He knew of the letters with which you pestered me from Philadelphia till one of them was returned in a blank cover, when I was absent from home. By whom it was done, I knew not; for I never considered it of importance enough to inquire. It was your troublesome attentions which induced Richard to inform you of my engagement. At that time, my father had other views. Your property, as well as that of your brothers, was hampered by a British debt. My father, therefore, preferred for my husband a person of clear and considerable estate. The sentiment of my heart did not accord with his intentions. Under these circumstances, I was

left at Bizarre, a girl, not seventeen, with the man she loved. I was betrothed to him, and considered him as my husband in the presence of that God whose name you presume to invoke on occasions the most trivial and for purposes the most malevolent. We should have been married, if Death had not snatched him away a few days after the scene which began the history of my sorrows. Your brother, Richard, knew every circumstance, but you are mistaken in supposing I exacted from him a promise of secrecy. He was a man of honor. Neither the foul imputations against us both, circulated by that kind of friendship which you have shown to my husband, nor the awful scene, to which he was afterwards called as an accomplice in the horrible crime, with which you attempt to blacken his memory, could induce him to betray the sister of his wife, the wife of his brother; I repeat it, Sir, the crime with which you now attempt to blacken his memory. You say that, to screen the character of such a creature as I am, the life and the fame of that most generous and gallant of men was put in jeopardy. His life alas! is now beyond the reach of your malice, but his fame, which should be dear to a brother's heart, is stabbed by the hand of his brother. You not only charge me with the heinous crime of infanticide, placing him in the condition of an accomplice, but you proceed to say that 'had it not been for the prudence of Mr. Harrison, or the mismanagement of not putting *me* first on my trial, we should both have swung on the same gibbet and the foul stain of incest and murder been stamped on his memory and associated with the idea of his offspring.' This, Sir, is the language you presume to write and address to me, enclosed in a cover to my husband for his inspection, after having been already communicated to other people. I will, for a moment, put myself out of question, and suppose the charge to be true. What must be the indignation of a feeling heart to behold a wretch rake up the ashes of his deceased brother to blast his fame? Who is there of nerve so strong as not to shudder at your savage regret that we did not swing on the same gibbet? I well remember, and you cannot have forgotten that, when sitting at the hospitable home of your venerable father-in-law, you threw a knife at that brother's head, and, if passion had

not diverted the aim, he would much earlier have been consigned to the grave, and you much earlier have met the doom which awaits your murderous disposition. It was, indeed, hoped that age and reflection had subdued your native barbarity. But, setting aside the evidence which your letter contains, the earnestness with which you disclosed in the presence of Col. Morris and his brother the Commodore [your desire?] to shoot a British soldier, to bear off his scalp and hang it up as an ornament in your house at Roanoke, shows that you have still the heart of a savage. I ask not of you but of a candid world whether a man like you is worthy of belief. On the melancholy occasion you have thought proper to bring forward there was the strictest examination. Neither your brother or myself had done anything to excite enmity, yet we were subjected to an unpitying persecution. The severest scrutiny took place; you know it. He was acquitted to the joy of numerous spectators, expressed in shouts of exultation. This, Sir, passed in a remote county of Virginia more than twenty years ago. You have revived the slanderous tale in the most populous city in the United States. For what? To repay my kindness to your nephew by tearing me from the arms of my husband and blasting the prospects of my child! Poor innocent babe, now playing at my feet, unconscious of his mother's wrongs. But it seems that on my apprehensions for his life first flashed convictions on your mind that my own hand had deprived in October, 1792, that of which I was delivered. You ought to have said, the last of September.

“You must, Mr. Randolph, have a most extraordinary kind of apprehension; for one child can induce you to believe in the destruction of another. But, waiving this absurdity, you acknowledge that every fact, which had come to your knowledge, every circumstance you had either heard or dreamt of in the long period of more than twenty years, had never imparted to you a belief, which nevertheless you expect to imprint on the minds of others. You thus pay to the rest of mankind the wretched compliment of supposing them more ready to believe the greatest crimes than ‘John Randolph of Roanoke.’ Doubtless there may be some, who are worthy of this odious distinction; I hope not many. I hope too that, in justice to the

more rational part of the community, you will wait (before you require their faith) until some such flash shall have enlightened their minds. Mark here, for your future government, the absurdity to which falsehood and malice inevitably lead a calumniator. They have driven you, while you endeavored to palliate inconsistency of conduct, into palpable self contradiction. Sensible as you must be that no respectable person can overlook the baseness of leaving your nephew so long, or even permitting him to come, under the roof of the wretch you describe me to be, you are compelled to acknowledge that you did not believe in the enormities you charge, until yourself had paid a visit to Morrisania. Thus you not only invalidate every thing like evidence to support your criminations but found them on circumstances which produce an effect (if they operate at all) directly opposite to that for which they are cited.

“ You have, Sir, on this subject presumed to use my sister’s name. Permit me to tell you, I do not believe one word of what you say. Were it true, it is wholly immaterial. But that it is not true, I have perfect conviction.

“ The assertion rests only on your testimony, the weight and value of which has been already examined. The contradiction is contained in her last letter to me, dated Dec. 17th, of which I enclose a copy. You will observe she cautions me against believing anything inconsistent with her gratitude for my kindness, and assures me that, altho’ prevented from spending the winter with us, she is proud of the honor done her by the invitation. With this letter before me, I should feel it an insult to her as well as an indignity to myself if I made any observations on your conduct at Bizarre. No one can think so meanly of a woman who moves in the sphere of a lady as to suppose she could be proud of the honor of being invited to spend a winter with the concubine of one of her slaves. Nevertheless, tho I disdain an answer to such imputations, I am determined they shall appear in the neighborhood under your hand; so that your character may be fully known and your signature forever hereafter be not only what it has hitherto been, the appendage of vainglorious boasting, but the designation of malicious baseness. You say I drove Mrs. Dudley



from my sister's house. A falsehood more absurd could hardly have been invented. She left the house the day before your brother was buried. I shall not enter into a detail of the circumstances, but this assertion also shall be communicated to the neighbourhood. It is well that your former constituents should know the creature in whom they put their trust. Virginians, in general, whatever may be their defects, have a high sense of honor. You speak with affected sensibility of my sister's domestic bliss, and you assume an air of indignation at the violence of my temper. Be pleased to recollect that, returning from a morning ride with your brother, you told me you found it would not do to interfere between man and wife; that you had recommended to him a journey to Connecticut to obtain a divorce; that he made no reply, nor spoke a single word afterwards. Recollect, too, how often, and before how many persons, and in how many ways, you have declared your detestation of her conduct as a wife and her angry passions. One form of expression occurs which is remarkable: 'I have heard,' said you, 'that Mrs. Randolph was handsome, and, perhaps, had I ever seen her in a good humor, I might have thought so; but her features are so distorted by constant wrath that she has to me the air of a fury.' And now, as to my disposition and conduct, be pleased not to forget (for people of a certain sort should have good memories) that, during full five years after your brother's death, and how much longer, I know not, I was the constant theme of your praise and, tho you wearied everyone else, you seemed on that subject to be yourself indefatigable. I should not say these things, if they rested merely on my own knowledge, for you would not hesitate to deny them, and I should be very sorry that my credibility were placed on the same level with yours. You have addressed me as a notorious liar, to which I make no other answer than that the answer, like your other charges, shall be communicated to those who know us both. You will easily anticipate their decision. In the meantime, it may not be amiss to refresh your memory with one sample of your veracity. There are many who remember, while your slaves were under mortgage for the British debt, your philanthropic assertion that you would make them free and provide tutors for them.

With this project, you wearied all who would listen. When, by the sale of some of them, a part of the debt was discharged, and an agreement made to pay the rest by installments, you changed your mind. This was not inexcusable, but when you set up for representation in Congress, and the plan to liberate your slaves was objected to in your District, you published, to the astonishment of numbers, who had heard you descant on your liberal intentions, that you *never* had any such idea. Thus your first step in public life was marked with falsehood. On entering the door of Congress, you became an outrageous patriot. Nothing in the French Revolution was too immoral or too impious for your taste and applause. Washington and Britain were the objects of your obloquy. This patriotic fever lasted till the conclusion of Mr. Chase's trial, from which you returned, complaining of the fatigue of your public labors, but elated with the prospect of a foreign mission. As usual, you rode your new Hobby to the annoyance of all who like me were obliged to listen. Your expected voyage enchanted you so much that you could not help talking of it even to your deaf nephew: '*Soon, my boy, we shall be sailing over the Atlantic.*' But, all at once, you became silent and seemed in deep melancholy. It appeared soon after that Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison, knowing your character, had prudently declined a compliance with your wishes. A new scene now opened; you became a patriot, double distilled, and founded your claim to the confidence of new friends on the breach of that which had been reposed by your old ones. I know not what others may think as to your treacherous disclosure of Mr. Madison's declaration, 'that the French want money and must have it,' but it is no slight evidence of his correct conduct, in general, that *you* had nothing else to betray.

"With the same insensibility to shame, which marks your allegations, you have denied the fact of turning me out of doors. This also shall be made known in the neighbourhood where it must be well remembered. I take the liberty again to refresh your memory. Shortly after your nephew (whom I had nursed several weeks in a dangerous illness at the hazard of my life) had left home to take the benefit of a change of air, you came into the room one evening, after you had been a long



time in your chamber with my sister, and said, addressing yourself to me, 'Nancy, when do you leave this house? The sooner the better for you take as many liberties as if you were in a tavern.' On this occasion, as on others, my course was silent submission. I was poor, I was dependent. I knew the house was kept in part at your expense. I could not therefore appeal to my sister. I replied with the humility, suitable to my forlorn condition, 'I will go as soon as I can.' You stalked haughtily about the room, and poor, unprotected 'Nancy' retired to seek the relief of tears. Every assertion of yours respecting my visit to Grovebrook is false. Mr. Murray cannot but acknowledge that I went there with Judge Johnston in his carriage, on my way to Hanover, after repeated invitations from his family, conveyed in letters from his daughters; that I left there in the chariot of my friend, Mr. Swan; that they pressed me not only to prolong my stay but to repeat my visit. Of this, Mr. Curd, a gentleman sent by Mr. Swan to escort me, was a witness.

"You are unfortunate in what passed two years after when I saw you at Richmond, but, before I refresh your memory on this subject, I must notice another malicious falsehood respecting my residence, while in Richmond. You say I took lodgings at Prior's, a public garden. It is true Mr. Prior owned a large lot in Richmond, and that there was a public building on it, in which public balls and entertainments were given, and this lot a public garden, but it is equally true that Mr. Prior's dwelling and the enclosure round it were wholly distinct from that garden. In that house, I lodged. My chamber was directly over Mrs. Prior's, a lady of as good birth as Mr. John Randolph and of far more correct principles. All this, Sir, you perfectly well know. From that chamber, I wrote you a note, complaining that your nephew, then a school boy in Richmond, was not permitted to see me. You sent [it] back, after writing on the same sheet, 'I return your note that you may compare it with my answer, and ask yourself, if you are not unjust to one who through life has been your friend.' This, with the recital of your professions of regard, made to my friend Lucy Randolph and her husband and her husband's brother Ryland, led me to suppose you had, in the last scene at Bizarre, acted only

as my sister's agent. I, therefore, wrote to you, remonstrating against the reason you assigned for turning me out of doors, which you yourself knew to be unfounded, for you had often observed that I was 'Epicene, the Silent Woman.' You knew that I was continually occupied at my needle or other work for the house, obeying, to the best of my knowledge, the orders I received, differing from any other servant only in this: I received no wages, but was permitted to sit at table, where I did not presume to enter into conversation or taste of wine, and very seldom of tea or coffee. I gave my letter open into the hands of Ryland Randolph, to be put by him into your hands. I pause here, Sir, to ask, whether, on the receipt of this letter, you pretended to deny having turned me out of doors? You dare not say so. You shortly after paid me a visit, the only one during your stay. You sat on my bedstead, I cannot say my bed, for I had none, I was too poor. When weary, my limbs were rested on a blanket, spread over the sacking. Your visit was long, and I never saw you from that day until we met in Washington. Some days after, you sent your nephew to offer me \$100 on the part of his mother. I supposed this to be a turn of delicacy, for, had you been the bearer of money from her, you would have delivered it, when you were in my chamber, and given me every needful assurance of the quarter from which it came. But, let it have come from whom it might, my feelings were too indignant to receive a boon at the hands of those by whom I had been so grievously wounded. I readily conceive, Sir, that this must have appeared to you inexplicable, for it must be very difficult for you to conceive how a person in my condition would refuse money from any quarter. It is true that, afterwards, when in Newport, suffering from want, and borne down by a severe ague and fever, I was so far humbled as to request not the gift (I would sooner have perished) but the loan of half that sum. My petition struck on a cold heart that emitted no sound. You did not deign to reply. You even made a boast of your silence. I was then so far off my groans could not be heard in Virginia. You no longer apprehended the [reproaches] which prompted your ostentatious offer at Richmond. Yes, Sir, you were silent. You then possessed the letter on which you grounded your calumnies.

You supposed me so much in your power that I should not dare to complain of your unkindness. Yes, Sir, you were silent, and you left your nephew nearly three months dependent on the charity of her, to whom in the extreme of wretchedness you had refused the loan of fifty dollars. Yes, Sir, you were silent. Perhaps, you hoped that the poor forlorn creature you had turned out of doors would, under the pressure of want, and far removed from every friend, be driven to a vicious course, and enable you to justify your barbarity by charges such as you have now invented.

“ You say you were informed of my associating with the players and my decline into a very drab by a friend in Richmond. Your letter shall be read in Richmond. You must produce that friend, unless you are willing yourself to father the falsehood which in Richmond will be notorious.

“ I defy you Mr. Randolph to substantiate by the testimony of any credible witness a single fact injurious to my reputation from the time you turned me out of doors until the present hour; and God knows that, if suffering could have driven me to vice, there was no want of suffering. My husband, in permitting me to write this letter, has enjoined me not to mention his kindness, otherwise I could give a detail of circumstances which, as they would not involve any pecuniary claim, might touch even *your* heart. You speak of him as an infirm old man, into whom I have struck the fangs of a harpy, after having acted in your family the part of a vampire. I pray you, Mr. ‘John Randolph of Roanoke,’ to be persuaded that such idle declamation, tho’ it might become a school boy to his aunt and cousins, is misplaced on the present occasion. You know as little of the manner in which my present connection began as of other things with which you pretend to be acquainted. I loved my husband before he made me his wife. I love him still more now that he has made me mother of one of the finest boys I ever saw; now that his kindness soothes the anguish which I cannot but feel from your unmanly attack. I am very sorry I am obliged to speak of your nephew. I would fain impute to his youth, or to some other excusable cause, his unnatural, and I must say, criminal, conduct. I hope the strength of my constitution, the consolation I derive from the

few friends who are left and the caresses of my beloved babe will enable me to resist the measures taken for my destruction by him and his uncle. Had his relations rested only on your testimony, I should not have hesitated to have acquitted him of the charge; but a part of them at least, not fully detailed in your letter, was made in Mr. Ogden's presence. This young man received several small sums of money which I sent him unasked, while he remained at Cambridge. Early in April, by a letter, which he addressed to me as his 'Dear good Aunt,' he requested the loan of thirty or forty dollars. I did not imitate the example you had set but immediately enclosed a check payable to his order for thirty dollars. I heard no more of him until the end of July, when a letter, dated in Providence, announced his intention of seeing me soon at Morrisania. At the same time, letters to my husband mentioned the dangerous condition of his health. On the 4th of August, a phaeton drove to the door with a led horse, and a person, appearing to be a servant, stepped out and enquired for Mr. Randolph. He was directed to the stable, and shortly after Mr. Randolph landed from the boat of a Packet. His appearance bespoke severe illness. I showed him to his chamber, and venture to say from that time to the moment of his departure he was treated by me with the tenderness and kindness of a mother. The injunction I have already mentioned restrains me from going into particulars. My health was injured by the fatigue to which I was exposed, the burthen of which I could not diminish without neglecting him; for I could not procure good nurses or servants. My husband's health, too, was, I believe, injured by the confinement which this youth occasioned; for he was prevented from taking a journey we were about to make for air and exercise among the mountains of New Jersey. We were also under the disagreeable necessity of keeping a servant whom our friends had denounced as a thief. By the bye, I have reason to believe he is one of those 'ancient domestics' you have taken under your protection. If so, I must in justice to myself inform you that your friend, Geo. Bevens, dismissed only two days before your arrival, was shortly after admitted to a lodging in the Bridewell of New York for theft. I had an opportunity,

indeed I was made by my laundress, to observe that your nephew (though driving his phaeton with a servant on horse back) had not a pair of stockings fit to wear; his man, Jonathan, dunning him in my presence for his wages. At one time, in particular, passing by his door, I heard Jonathan ask for money. My heart prompted me to offer relief. As I entered his room for that purpose (it was two days after a violent hemorrhage which threatened his life), he was rising feebly from his bed, and, when I mentioned my object, said in a tremulous voice, 'My dear Aunt, I was coming to ask you.' I bade his servant follow me and gave him \$5.00. Tudor had returned the \$30 first borrowed but, shortly afterwards, increased the debt \$10 to furnish as I supposed, his travelling companion, Mr. Bruce, [of Rhode Island] with the means of returning home. A few days after that, I supplied him with an additional \$20. I gave stockings and, before his departure, sent \$30 to one of Mr. Morris' nieces to purchase handkerchiefs which he wanted and which his mother said he could not afford to buy. The evening you left Morrisania, I received a note from this lady excusing herself for not executing my commission by reason of the death of a cousin and returning the money because she understood that my sister was to go the next Tuesday. You witnessed my surprise at receiving such information in such a way. You will recollect what followed. After your departure, I communicated the note to your nephew, and told him, as he was going to town, he could purchase the handkerchiefs for himself. I gave him thirty dollars which he put in his pocket and thanked me. Two days after, when in town, he said to me, 'Aunt I wish you would choose the handkerchiefs yourself; I should value them more.' He forgot, however, to return the money. I purchased the Hdkffs, together with a merino tippet to protect his chest, and received again his thanks which were reiterated the same day by his mother at Mr. Ogden's. The debt, amounting to \$65.00, she paid at Morrisania. The \$30 were enclosed in her note, dated Saturday morning, of which I send you herewith [a] copy together with that of the 3rd November from Philadelphia. (a)

"And now, Sir, put the actual parties out of the question,

and say what credit can be due to the calumnies of a person in your nephew's situation, soliciting and receiving favors to the very last moment. Let me add, after he had poured his slanders into your ear or repeated them from your dictation, he left me to discharge one of his doctor's bills, which he said I offered to pay, and receive his thanks in advance. Is it proper, or is it decent to found such calumnies on the suspicions of such a creature?, even supposing them to have originated in his mind, and not been, as is too probable, instigated by you? Could anything but the most determined and inveterate malice induce any one above the level of an idiot to believe the only fact he pretended to articulate? Who can believe me cruel to my child? When it is notorious my fault is too great indulgence; that my weakness is too great solicitude, and that I have been laughed at for instances of maternal care by which my health was impaired. You cite as from him these words, 'How shocking she looks. I have not met her eyes three times since I have been in the house.' Can you believe this? Can you believe others to believe it? How happens it you did not cry out as anyone else would have done? 'Why did you stay in that house? Why did you submit to her kindness? Why did you accept her presents? Why did you pocket her money?' To such an apostrophe he might have replied perhaps. 'Uncle I could not help it. I was penniless, in daily expectation that you or my mother would bring relief. When at last she came, I found her almost as ill-off as myself. We were both detained till you arrived.' To this excuse, which is a very lame one for a person who had a phaeton to sell or pledge, any one who feels a spark of generosity in his bosom would reply. 'Why, then, wretch, having from necessity or choice laid yourself under such a load of obligations, do you become the calumniator of your benefactress? Are you yet to learn what is due to the rites of hospitality, or have you, at the early age of nineteen, been taught to combine profound hypocrisy with deadly hate and assume the mask of love that you may more surely plant the assassin's dagger? Where did you learn these horrible lessons?' This last, Sir, would have been a dangerous question on your part. He might have replied and may yet reply, 'Uncle, I learned this from you.'

“But, to return to the wonderful circumstance that this young man had not met my eyes above once a month, though he saw me frequently every day. That he met them seldomer than I wished is true. I was sorry to observe what others had remarked, that he rarely looked any one in the face. I excused this sinister air to myself, and tried to excuse it to others as a proof of uncommon modesty, of which nevertheless he gave no other proof. I sometimes succeeded in my endeavours to make people believe that this gloomy, guilty look proceeded from bashfulness. I know not, and shall not pretend to guess, what heavy matter pressed on his conscience; perhaps it was only the disposition to be criminal. At present, [now] that he has an opportunity (with your assistance) to gratify that disposition, he will, I presume, be less capable of assuming the air of an honest man, [and] he will probably find himself frequently on leaving good company in condition to repeat the same sentence of self-condemnation: ‘Uncle, I have not met their eyes three times since I have been in the house.’

“You make him say, ‘my first impression as far back as I can remember is that she was an unchaste woman—my brother knew her better than I—she never could do anything with him’—This too is admirable testimony to support your filthy accusations.

“Pray, Mr. John Randolph of Roanoke, why did you not inform your audience that, when you turned me out of doors, this Mr. Tudor Randolph was but nine years old, and his brother, poor deaf and dumb Saint George, just thirteen—Can it be necessary to add to your confusion by a single remark? It seems to me, if any one present at your wild declamation, had noticed this fact, you would have been hissed even by a sisterhood of old maids. Unluckily for you, I have letters from poor Saint George, one of which, written shortly before his late malady, is filled with assurances of attachment. In that which I received, while I was in Washington, he makes particular and affectionate inquiries respecting Col [Monroe’s] family. These show that he does not participate in your ingratitude, but feels as he ought the kindness of that gentleman, who, at your instance, took him into his family in London



and watched over him with parental care. You repay this favor byslanders which I have the charity to believe you are too polite to pronounce in the Col's presence. I have a letter from my sister telling me the pleasure St. George manifested at the present of my portrait I made him. I have a letter also from her, shortly after her house was burnt, in which she tells me among the few things saved she was rejoiced to find my portrait which you brought out with your own. By this act, you have some right to it, and, should my present ill health lead me shortly to the grave, you may hang it up in your castle at Roanoke next to the Englishman's scalp—a trophy of the family prowess. I observe, Sir, in the course of your letter allusion to one of Shakespeare's best tragedies. I trust you are by this time convinced that you have clumsily performed the part of 'honest Iago.' Happily for my life, and for my husband's peace, you did not find in him a headlong, rash Othello. For a full and proper description of what you have written and spoken on this occasion, I refer you to the same admirable author. He will tell you it is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. (a)

“ANN C. MORRIS.”

Copies of these letters are in the possession of the New York Public Library and other copies are in that of the Virginia Historical Society. Numerous other copies, in the possession of private individuals or booksellers, have been brought to the attention of the author besides. The copies, in the possession of the New York Public Library, came to it from Henrietta Graham Youngs, the wife of Thomas F. Youngs, of New York, a member of the Morris family connection, and are supposed to have been made from the original and copy formerly in the possession of Mrs. Gouverneur Morris.<sup>1</sup> Not only her reply to Randolph's letter but her correspondence with Jos. C. Cabell and Wm. B. Giles showed that it was her desire to give as wide circulation as possible, in Virginia at any rate, to the

<sup>1</sup> Letter, dated Mar. 4, 1919, from H. M. Lydenberg, Reference Librarian, N. Y. Pub. Libr., to the Author.



correspondence; and it may well be doubted whether, since papyrus rolls and parchment sheets ceased to perform the present function of printed books, any unprinted thing of the kind has ever been so frequently copied and circulated.

A curious supplement to this correspondence was a letter written by Randolph to Judith Randolph from Georgetown, about a year later, which discloses the fact that, at the time of his brother Richard's death, he was not cognizant of the true circumstances surrounding the Glenlyvar incident, and hints—an insinuation, supported by nothing but his suspicion—that Nancy Randolph, influenced by the knowledge that Richard Randolph had of her secret and the strong aversion that he had formed to her, might have administered poison to him.

“In Dec. 1795,” the letter says, “I went to Charleston and Georgia; returned in May, [and] went on a few days afterwards to Petersburg with my brother Richard, where I was taken sick. He left me convalescent (himself in perfect health), and returned home *via* Richmond; having business at the Federal court. I have never been able to account for my not having been sent for at first; for of the circumstances of my brother's death I was entirely in ignorance until since my return home in March last. I made none but general inquiry and was told that an emetic (Tartar) had caused his dissolution. Of his marked aversion to Nancy (now Mrs. Morris) I had not the most distant hint or suspicion. On the contrary, I supposed that, like myself, she was agonized with grief at the loss of her best friend and benefactor; little as I dreamt at that time what she owed him. Did she mix or hand him the medicine? I ask it for my own ease and comfort. Had she the opportunity for doing the deed? The motive is now plain as well as her capability for the act. Had I known the abhorrence that he expressed for her, worlds should not have tempted me to remain in the same house with her. I was an inmate with her for how many years (10 years was it not?) under your roof.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Jan. 20, 1816, Grinnan MSS.

This letter was apparently written in acknowledgment of a statement made to Randolph by Judith, at his request, of the circumstances surrounding Richard's death.

At one time Mrs. Morris made an effort to draw Wm. B. Giles into the quarrel between Randolph and herself opened up by the 1814-15 correspondence; but with no effect except to elicit a letter from Randolph to Giles as keen and cold as the point of a rapier which gave Giles a plain warning that, if he intervened in that quarrel, he would be held to the full measure of personal responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

There is no evidence that Nancy Randolph was to any extent such a "moral Clytemnestra of her lord" as Randolph made her out to be; but her correspondence with Joseph C. Cabell, long after the interchange of letters between herself and Randolph, suggests the suspicion that, if she had been a man, Randolph himself might well have been the subject of a Greek tragedy; and this, despite the fact that, in the first of her letters to Cabell, she pictures her family life as gliding on so smoothly in her luxurious home that slander, to use her exact words, "sounds like distant thunder."<sup>2</sup> In another letter to Cabell, she says: "I seldom think of Jack unless his attacks on some other persons become a subject of discussion—wretched animal—

"He from whom no one ever grew wiser,  
He of invective the great monopolizer."<sup>3</sup>

It is evident from the same letter that her idea was that it was from David Ogden, whom she paints in the very blackest colors, that John Randolph derived his belief in New York that she was dishonoring the bed of her husband. Indeed, she says that Jack Randolph became but

<sup>1</sup> Letter from J. R. to Giles, Mar. 12, 1815, N. Y. Pub. Libr.

<sup>2</sup> Morrisania, May 30, 1828, U. of Va. Libr.

<sup>3</sup> Morrisania, Oct. 14, 1831, U. of Va. Libr.

the humble tool of Ogden. (a) In this letter she terms him "Crazy Jack," notwithstanding the fact that, in an earlier letter she had said: "Some people think him crazy, but it seems to me more like the account given of those whom Satan entered in old times."<sup>1</sup> A reply by Cabell, to one of Mrs. Morris' letters discloses the fact that, in addition to her offer to him to show how corrupt the branch of the Randolph family, to which Jack Randolph belonged, had always been—an offer prompted by the attack which Randolph had made upon the intellectual capacity of William H. Cabell, at one time Governor, and afterwards presiding Judge, of the Court of Appeals of Virginia—she had also offered to place at the disposal of Wm. H. Cabell, for his retaliatory use, certain letters which had passed between Randolph and Gouverneur Morris about the time of Randolph's visit to Morrisania. The tender was made through Jos. C. Cabell, and was declined by him on behalf of Wm. H. Cabell, as the same letter shows. The same letter also shows that she had nevertheless forwarded the letters to Jos. C. Cabell for his personal perusal, as he supposed. Whilst he in his reply speaks of the cordial feelings that Judge St. George Tucker cherished for Mrs. Morris until the close of his life; sends her the good wishes of Judge Tucker's widow and Mrs. Cabell; thanks her for her tasteful and much valued presents to Mrs. Cabell at different times, and even begs Mrs. Morris to accept his humble prayers that her son might live to be the comfort of her remaining years, that she might survive the many troubles by which she still seemed to be surrounded, and that increasing years might bring to her all the indemnification for past injuries and misfortunes which prosperity and this life can afford; yet it is obvious that neither Joseph C. Cabell, nor his brother Wm. H. Cabell, had any idea of allowing themselves to be embroiled with such a "monopolizer of invec-

<sup>1</sup> Morrisania, June 7, 1830, U. of Va. Libr.

tive" or Hotspur as John Randolph of Roanoke. In fact, Jos. C. Cabell did not reply to Mrs. Morris for more than a year after the receipt of the letter which his reply acknowledged.<sup>1</sup>

At one time, Randolph entertained a very cordial regard for Jos. C. Cabell; but the friendly intercourse between the two men ceased for some reason after the Burr trial with which the latter, like Randolph, was connected as a Grand Juror. Since Randolph was never intimate, so far as we know, with any other member of the Cabell connection, there was nothing to restrain him from giving full vent to partisan violence, when Wm. H. Cabell, though at the time a Judge of the Court of Appeals of Virginia, allowed himself to be made the presiding officer of the Adams, or anti-Jackson, Convention held in the City of Richmond; which was the occasion of Randolph's attack on him. (a)

One of the letters written by Mrs. Morris to Jos. C. Cabell shows that as late as 1831 she was still in correspondence with some of her early Virginia friends and relations, namely; Mrs. Scott, Mrs. Carrington, and Polly Harrison; as well as some of her family connections, namely; her cousin Lucy Randolph, of Alabama, her sister Mrs. David Meade Randolph, and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Thomas Mann Randolph, the daughter of Thomas Jefferson.<sup>2</sup>

The letters from Mrs. Morris to Joseph C. Cabell also have much to say about her son Gouverneur, to whom she seems to have been very much attached, and whom she describes as being in 1831 six feet one inch, in height, though only 18 years and some months old.<sup>3</sup>

She also has something to say, with a distinct under-strain of pride, about the heavy charges from which she

<sup>1</sup> Warminster, Sept. 6, 1831, U. of Va. Libr.

<sup>2</sup> Morrisania, Sept. 13, 1831, & Oct. 14, 1831, U. of Va. Libr.

<sup>3</sup> Morrisania, Oct. 14, 1831, U. of Va. Libr.

had freed the estate committed to her care as trustee and guardian by Gouverneur Morris: "Now," she says, "the ante-nuptial contract is the *only* remaining debt; so that I can safely say my noble-minded son's property is unencumbered."<sup>1</sup>

But more interesting still is the account which she gives in this letter of the manner in which she came to be the wife of her husband.

"More than 22 years have elapsed," she declares, "since I came here to live, and I have nothing to reproach myself with. In my husband's biography will be seen an account of his domestic happiness. I knew Mr. Morris in the years 86 and 88. He visited me at old Mrs. Pollack's, in New York, in 1808, and expressed a wish that some reduced gentlewoman would undertake to keep his house, as the lower class of house-keepers often provoked the servants to a riot in his dwelling. He went to his lands where he remained 6 months; on his return he proposed my coming to keep house for him; I thought it much better to have employment than remain a burthen on my friends; all his letters to me are copied (by him) in one of the letter books Mr. Sparks [Jared Sparks] has in Boston."<sup>2</sup>

And in the first of her letters to Cabell she declared: "I glory in stating that I was married in a gown patched at the elbows, being one of the only two I had in the world."

In these letters, too, Mrs. Morris also makes much of the money that she or her husband had advanced on Tudor's account, but which she admits was all paid back to her by Judith Randolph. Whatever credit may attach to her other charges against John Randolph, it is unquestionable that she made entirely too much of this matter. Tudor was but a youth, and evidence has come down to us that, though not in the least dissipated, he lived quite

<sup>1</sup> Morrisania, Oct. 14, 1831, U. of Va. Libr.

<sup>2</sup> Morrisania, May 30, 1828, U. of Va. Libr.

extravagantly when he was pursuing his brilliant career at Harvard.<sup>1</sup> It was a long way from Harvard to Virginia then, and his need for the assistance of his Aunt, Mrs. Morris, was, doubtless, entirely unexpected to both his mother and his uncle; for nothing stands out more saliently from the life of Randolph than the generous manner in which he lavished money as well as affection on Tudor. Immediately after Randolph's visit to Morrisania, we find him expressing in a letter to Dr. Dudley his dissatisfaction with Judith because she would not permit Tudor to sit for his portrait to Sully in Philadelphia; "under the thin pretext," he said, "that the paint would prove injurious to his lungs."<sup>2</sup>

The letter, to which Jos. C. Cabell sent his reply, contains a paragraph which adds another curious feature to the remarkable conditions under which Randolph's savage letter to Mrs. Morris was written in New York.

"When Judy went from here [Morrisania] we accompanied her to the city and lodged near her. My husband was twice a day in Jack's sick room and I took my son in to see him also. The evening after our return, our market-man brought a note from Jack desiring to see Mr. Morris immediately. He requested me to write an answer stating that he and our little boy had taken cold, and he could not leave home. I enclose now his—Jack's—little red note. Next it seems his masterpiece was composed, and lastly the one which I sent you a month ago. You observe he mentions not being able to bear jolting, then said, if Mr. Morris had answered his note, he should have come here."<sup>3</sup>

The letter which Mrs. Morris mentions as having been sent to Jos. C. Cabell the month before was a letter from

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 342.

<sup>2</sup> Phila., Dec. 4, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> Morrisania, June 7, 1830, U. of Va. Libr.

Randolph to Gouverneur Morris; and for some reason it never reached Cabell.<sup>1</sup>

It was when Tudor was at Morrisania that he received the autobiographical letter from his uncle on which we have drawn so freely in the earlier part of this book. After Tudor's death, Randolph was desirous of reclaiming this letter, but he was unable to do so; and, shortly after his own death, it was published in part in the *New York Commercial Advertiser*. It was evidently suspected by Jos. C. Cabell that it was published by Mrs. Morris, because a letter from J. Aug. Smith to Cabell, dated Sept. 25, 1833, states that he had called on the editor of the *Commercial Advertiser*, at Cabell's request, and had been assured by him that the letter had not been placed in his hands by Mrs. Morris but by a clergyman and professor in one of their high institutions whose name he refused to disclose.<sup>2</sup>

It can be truly said, however, that rarely have infirmities of temper been attended with more palliating circumstances than in Randolph's case. "A letter from his most intimate and valued friend, Mr. Macon, written to me after his death," Thomas H. Benton says, "expressed the belief that he had never enjoyed during his life one day of perfect health—such as well people enjoy."<sup>3</sup> "I believe that he never had an hour of good health, nor was he ever free from physical suffering," is the equally emphatic testimony of Dr. I. B. Rice, a resident of Charlotte County, who knew Randolph well.<sup>4</sup> To be confined to what Heine called a "mattress grave" is about the only physical extremity to which Randolph was never subjected. That he should have been the active horseman and sportsman that he was, and that he should have so frequently participated, often at great length, in the debates of the

<sup>1</sup> Jos. C. Cabell, to Ann C. Morris, Warminster, Sept. 6, 1831, U. of Va. Libr.

<sup>2</sup> U. of Va. Libr.

<sup>3</sup> *30 Yrs.' View*, v. 1, 473.

<sup>4</sup> Bouldin, 115.



House, are but proofs of the indomitable spirit which nothing but absolutely the last pressure of Death's skeleton fingers upon his throat ever subdued. As far back as 1791, when he was but 18 years of age, we find him writing from Philadelphia to his young friend, Henry M. Rutledge, that he was as unwell as he had ever been in the course of his life, and, though not dangerously ill, was pestered with a cursed disorder in his bowels which gave him great pain and sensations similar to those produced by sea-sickness; and chronic diarrhoea became so fastened upon him that, as time went on, he repeatedly stated in his letters that food passed through his stomach and bowels entirely unchanged.

In 1803, when he was but 30 years of age, his appearance was that of an old man, prematurely overtaken by physical decrepitude, and doomed to an early death.<sup>1</sup> In 1804, he wrote to Nicholson that his nerves were shattered to pieces.<sup>2</sup> In February, 1805, he wrote to Nicholson that an excruciating pain, accompanied by fever which flew like lightning from his head to his stomach, bowels, hands, etc., had inflicted upon him all the torments of the damned, and compelled him to resort to an opiate.<sup>3</sup> This pain he referred to the gout, "a proteus," he said, "which can assume any shape in the long and dreadful catalogue of disease."<sup>4</sup> Later in the same year, he wrote to Nicholson that his bowels were torn to pieces.<sup>5</sup>

It would be a sickening task to enumerate all the occasions on which serious or alarming illness drew expressions of suffering from Randolph. They were so numerous that, at times, we cannot but recall the savage accusation of John Quincy Adams that Randolph turned his diseases to commodity,<sup>6</sup> or wonder whether he did not

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 170.      <sup>2</sup> Bizarre, July 1, 1804, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>3</sup> Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>4</sup> Letter to St. G. Tucker, Feb. 22, 1805, Lucas MSS.

<sup>5</sup> Washington, Nov. 16, 1805, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>6</sup> *Memoirs*, Feb. 26, 1831, v. 8, 328.



suffer more than most stricken men do merely because his sensibility of body and mind was so much keener than theirs. One of his letters to Elizabeth T. Coalter indicates that he, himself, felt that things were not always quite as bad as he represented them to be. "All our family," he said, "make too much fuss about health; so don't mind me. It is the effect of former affluence and ease. With the cause it will gradually cease."<sup>1</sup> But, even after taking Randolph's peculiarities of temperament and training fully into account, we are amply warranted in doubting whether any man, as gravely diseased throughout his life as he was, ever exhibited more physical and mental activity.

We pass over all the stages of his life except those when his ill health was so aggravated as to imperil his existence or to subject him to extreme sickness. To do otherwise, would be out of the question; for what he said of himself in 1810 he could have truthfully said of himself at almost any period of his life: "Indeed, exemption from pain has become with me a highly pleasurable sensation."<sup>2</sup>

As early as February 20, 1808, Randolph, when recovering from a fall, which had confined him to Philip Key's home at Georgetown for some time, wrote to Nicholson as follows:

"I can walk after a fashion, but the worst of my case is a general decay of the whole system. I am racked with pain and up the better part of every night from disordered stomach and bowels. My digestive faculties are absolutely worn out. When to all this you add spitting of blood from the lungs and a continual fever, you may have some idea of my situation. But crazy as my constitution is, it will perhaps survive that of our country."<sup>3</sup>

In the succeeding year, he wrote to his stepfather from Bizarre that he was still in that situation in which life is

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 18, 1822, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to St. Geo. Tucker, Georgetown, Mar. 13, 1810, Lucas MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

but a burthen to its possessor—racked with pain and never for two hours together free from some affection of his stomach and bowels; that, in short, his whole nervous system was shattered to atoms, and that, if it were not for the society and attentions of Theodore Dudley, his existence would be insupportable.<sup>1</sup> In 1811, he wrote to his sister that he did not know a day without pain or disquietude.<sup>2</sup> By this time, diarrhœa—the disease which (he said) had terminated the career of every member of his family—had become chronically fixed upon him.<sup>3</sup> Many years later, he took an outbreak of this malady lightly enough to heart, however, to write humorously to Dr. Brockenbrough that, like the gallant Gen. H. (William Henry Harrison, we suppose) “he was *pursued*” by it.<sup>4</sup> (a) In 1813, he believed himself to be on the verge of the grave from rheumatism and gout.<sup>5</sup> In the same year, in a letter to Dr. Dudley from Bowling Green, he describes himself as having been nearly mad with pain,<sup>6</sup> and a little later, he wrote to Francis Scott Key from Roanoke, “Alas! so far from taking the field against the poor partridges, I can hardly hobble about my own cabin. It pleased God on Tuesday last to deprive me of the use of my limbs.”<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the low condition to which Randolph was reduced in 1817 was for some years the standard by which he judged the severity of all the morbid onsets that he had to face from time to time afterwards. Referring to this attack, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough:

“It was, I believe, a case of croup combined with the affection of the liver and the lungs. Nor was it unlike tetanus, since the muscles of the neck and back were rigid and the jaw locked. I never expected, when the clock struck two, to hear

<sup>1</sup> Nov. 14, 1809, Lucas MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Aug. 19, 1811, J. C. Grinnan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Nicholson, Bizarre, Dec. 4, 1809, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>4</sup> Garland, v. 2, 270.

<sup>5</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 137.

<sup>6</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 139.

<sup>7</sup> Oct. 17, 1813, Garland, v. 2, 26.

the bell again; fortunately, as I found myself going, I dispatched a servant (about one) to the apothecary for an ounce of laudanum. Some of this poured down my throat through my teeth restored me to something like life. I was quite delirious, but had method in my madness; for they tell me I ordered Juba to load my gun and to shoot the first 'Doctor' that should enter the room; adding, 'They are only mustard seed and will serve just to sting him.'"<sup>1</sup>

By the next day, after the inauguration of Monroe, Randolph had rallied enough to leave Washington for Richmond. His description of the journey is too characteristic to be omitted:

"No mitigation of my cruel symptoms took place until the third day of my journey, when I threw physic to the dogs and, instead of opium, tincture of columbo, hypercarbonate of soda, etc., etc., I drank, in defiance of my physician's prescription, copiously of cold spring water and ate plentifully of ice. Since that change of regimen, my strength has increased astonishingly, and I have even gained some flesh or rather skin. The first day, Wednesday the fifth, I could travel no farther than Alexandria. At Dumfries, where I lay, but slept not, on Thursday night, I had nearly given up the ghost. At a spring, five miles on this side, after crossing Chappawamsick, I took upon an empty and sick stomach upwards of a pint of living water, unmixed with Madeira, which I have not tasted since. It was the first thing that I had taken into my stomach since the first of February that did not produce nausea. It acted like a charm, and enabled me to get on to B's that night, where I procured ice. I also devoured with impunity a large pippin (forbidden fruit to me). Next day I got to the Oaks forty-two miles. Here, I was more unwell than the night before. On Sunday morning, I reached my friends, Messers. A. & Co. to breakfast at half-past eight."<sup>2</sup>

After arriving in Richmond, Randolph had a relapse, and lay utterly prostrate for many weeks at the home of

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 23, 1817, Garland, v. 2, 91.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 93.

Mr. Cunningham in that city.<sup>1</sup> In 1824, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough that the noisome atmosphere of the House had overcome him and that he had had a copious effusion of blood from his lungs<sup>2</sup>; and in 1825, he wrote to Francis W. Gilmer from Roanoke that he had been at death's door.<sup>3</sup> In 1826, he wrote to the same correspondent:

"In the nature of things, it is impossible that I can hold out long. Neither is it desirable to myself, and therefore ought not to be to my friends. I am now sorry that I accepted the seat in the Senate, as I shall be on the hospital list all winter. I am plied by the fiercest tortures, with small and few remissions."<sup>4</sup>

During this illness, he had what he thought was the highest fever, but one, that he had ever felt.<sup>5</sup> Shortly after he formed this impression, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough: "I am really ill; the whole machine is rotten; the nails and screws that I drive will not take hold but draw out with the decayed wood."<sup>6</sup> In the succeeding year, he thought that he had not been so sensible of the failure of his bodily powers since 1817. "A man with a tooth-ache," he said, apologetically, "thinks only of his fang."<sup>7</sup>

In the succeeding year, his plight, if anything, was worse. From Roanoke, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough that, since his return to that spot, he had scarcely been off his bed, except when he was in it. "My cough has increased very much," he added, "and my fever never intermits; with this, pain in the breast and all the attendant ills."<sup>8</sup> A little later, he wrote to the same friend that nothing seemed to relieve the anxiety, distress and languor to which he was by turns subjected, or the pains, rheu-

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 94.

<sup>2</sup> Apr. 25, Garland, v. 2, 218.

<sup>3</sup> July 2, Bryan MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Washington, Jan. 17, 1826, Bryan MSS.

<sup>5</sup> Letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, Feb. 10, 1826, J. C. Grinnan MSS.

<sup>6</sup> Mar. 4, 1826, Garland, v. 2, 269.

<sup>7</sup> Letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, Feb. 21, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 286.

<sup>8</sup> Mar. 30, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 290.

matic or gouty, that were continually flying about him.<sup>1</sup> He was in that state of mind which regards the good health, that is the common possession of most men and women, as the gift, of all others, spun by the Parcæ from their finest wool. "But I have so true a judgment," he said, a few weeks later, "of the value of this world and its contents that I would not give the strength and health of one of my negro men for the wisdom of Solomon and the wealth of Croesus and the power of Cæsar.

" ' Though Solomon, with a thousand wives,  
To get a wise successor strives;  
But one, and he a fool, survives.' " <sup>2</sup>

In the next year, his physical misery is so poignant that he writes of himself in these terms to Dr. Brockenbrough, who, faithful friend though he was, must have wearied at times of the procession of grisly horrors which Randolph's letters steadily kept before his eyes.

"My dear friend, I hope to hear from you by Sam on Saturday night, and to receive Lord Byron in a coffin where I shall very soon be. I daily grow worse; if that can be called 'growth' which is diminution and not increase. My food passes from me unchanged. Liver, lungs, stomach, (which I take to be the original seat of disease) bowels and the whole carnal man are diseased to the last extent. Diarrhea incessant—nerves broken—cramps—spasms—vertigo—Shall I go on?—No, I will not. I have horses that I cannot ride—wine that I cannot drink. . . . my cough is tremendous. . . . My dear friend, you and I know that the cough and diarrhea and pain in the side and shoulder are the last stage of my disorder, whether of lungs, in the first instance, or of liver. I send you the measure of my thigh at the thickest part. Calves, I have none, except those that suck their dams; but, then, I have

<sup>1</sup> May 22, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 292.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, Roanoke, June 12, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 293.

ankles that will outmeasure yours or any other man's as far as you beat me in thighs."<sup>1</sup>

When Randolph next wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough, it was to tell him that he had been compelled to resort to the drug of which, a year or so later, he was to say: "I live by, if not upon, opium."<sup>2</sup>

"I write again," he said, "to tell you that extremity of suffering has driven me to the use of what I have had a horror of all my life—I mean opium; and I have derived more relief from it than I could have anticipated. I took it to mitigate severe pain and to check the diarrhea. It has done both; but, to my surprise, it has had an equally good effect upon my cough which now does not disturb me in the night, . . . yet I can't ride, but I hobble with a stick, and scold and threaten my lazy negroes, who are building a house between my well and kitchen, and two (a stable boy and an undergardener) mending the road against you come."<sup>3</sup>

In the latter part of 1829, Randolph, as we have seen, experienced a considerable improvement in his health; but, in the early part of that year, he was worse off, if anything, than he was in 1828, and, on April 21, 1829, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough these pathetic words:

"My dear friend, we shall not 'meet in October'; I am anchored for life. My disease every day assumes a more aggravated character. I have been obliged to renounce wine altogether. Coffee is my only cheerer. A high fever every night which goes off about day-break with a colliquative sweat; vile pain in the side and breast; incessant cough—with all my tenacity of life, this can't hold long. I have rode once or twice a mile or two, but it exhausts me. The last 3 days have been warm, but, last night, we had a storm, and it was cold again. Luckily, I have no appetite, for I have hardly any-

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, May 27, 1828, Garland, v. 2, 307.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 344.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, May 30, 1828, Garland, v. 2, 308.

thing to eat, except asparagus, which is very fine and nice. I tried spinach *à la Française*, but it disagrees with me. You see that like Dogberry 'I bestow all my tediousness upon you.' You know my maxim 'that every man is of great consequence to himself.' The trees are budding and the forest begins to look gay, but, when I cast my eyes upon the blossoms, the sad lines of poor Michael Bruce recur to my memory:

" 'Now spring returns, but not to me returns  
The vernal joy my better years have known.  
Dim in my breast life's dying taper burns,  
And all the joys of life with health are flown.' " <sup>1</sup>

The condition of Randolph's health after 1829 has already been incidentally touched upon in the preceding passages of this book, and it was marked by such painful evidences of physical disintegration that no useful purpose would be subserved by dwelling upon it more closely, except to transcribe this last despairing groan in August, 1832, of a cruelly persecuted existence.

"My lungs made a noble resistance, but, like the Poles, they were over-powered. The disease is now phthisis; and the tubercles are softening for breaking out into open ulcers; liver, spleen, heart, (I hope the pericardium) but above all, the *stomach* diseased, and this last, I fear, incurable. My diet is water gruel for breakfast; tomatoes and crackers for dinner, and no supper; yet these, taken in the very smallest quantities that can sustain life, throw me into all the horrors of an indigestion; so that I put off eating as long as possible, and thereby make a dinner of my breakfast, and a sort of supper at five or six o'clock of my dinner. Sleep, I am nearly a stranger to. Many nights I pass bolt upright in my easy chair; for, when propped up by pillows in bed, so as to be nearly erect from the hips upwards, I cough incessantly and am racked to death." <sup>2</sup>

Randolph's disease was, and long had been, consumption, we imagine, though none but a physician could say

<sup>1</sup> Apr. 21, 1829, Garland, v. 2, 316.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 349.

authoritatively whether the real *nidus* of his ailments was his lungs or his stomach. The wording of many of his complaints about his maladies is so vivid that at times we find it hard to believe that it is not just a little over-colored. Certainly, never did any invalid drape his recitals of his physical pains and disabilities with such a picturesque or classical dress. Writing to Dr. Brockenbrough, about the time of the Missouri controversy, he said: "Whatever it be, something is passing in the noble viscera of no ordinary character. They have got a Missouri question there that threatens a divulsion of soul from body."<sup>1</sup>

Referring to another occasion, on which he said that he had received his death wound, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough as follows:

"Had I not spoken on the last of these days, I might have weathered this point, and clawed off of death's lee shore. My disease is assuming a hectic type. I believe the lungs are affected symptomatically through sympathy with the liver; at least, I hope so. Yet, why hope when the vulture daily whets his beak for a repast upon my ever growing liver, and his talons are fixed in my very vitals?"<sup>2</sup>

Even Randolph's body could not decay without shining with a certain amount of phosphorescent brightness.

But we are not dependent solely upon himself for our knowledge of his physical state during his last years in Congress. In the letters to Weldon N. Edwards from Nathaniel Macon, who lodged in the same house at Washington with Randolph in 1827 and 1828, there are numerous references to Randolph's wretched health at that period of his life, and it was a source of astonishment to Macon, as it is to us, that such a disease-ridden man could have delivered such long and effective speeches as he did during the first session of the Twentieth Congress.

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 24, 1820, Garland, v. 2, 133.

<sup>2</sup> Feb. 23, 1820, Garland, v. 2, 132.



In one of these letters, dated February 17, 1828, Macon says that, when it was remembered that Randolph, during the winter of 1827 to 1828, had been confined more than half of his time to his bed or room, it would seem impossible that he could have spoken in the House as he had done.<sup>1</sup> In a later letter, Macon said:

“Mr. Randolph’s health is generally bad; he is more thin and poor than you ever saw him but once. He is almost skeleton; to look at him, it does appear impossible that he could undergo the fatigue of a long speech. His last is undoubtedly a masterly one; but which is the best of all he ever made, I cannot undertake to decide. Among the truly great, it is difficult to decide.”<sup>2</sup>

In still another letter, Macon tells us that, by way of illustrating the limitations on his strength at this time when speaking, Randolph told him to tell Edwards that his minutes had an hour’s errand to go, like Sheridan’s six pence, which had to perform the office of two shillings.<sup>3</sup>

To Randolph’s other infirmities was added poor eyesight; and in his letters this subject was frequently mentioned. As early as February 15, 1800, he wrote to Nicholson: “I am literally blind,”<sup>4</sup> and, nine years later, he wrote to him that he would probably have to go to Philadelphia to consult the celebrated Dr. Physick about his eyes which were sadly decayed.<sup>5</sup> Twenty-two years later, he wrote to his niece that his eyes had begun to see green ink and double strokes since he commenced the letter that he was writing to her—“sometimes violet.”<sup>6</sup> Twenty-three years later, he wrote to her that he could not see a single character that he was tracing with his pen.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Macon Papers*, N. C. Hist. Soc.

<sup>2</sup> Mar. 6, 1828, *Macon Papers*, N. C. Hist. Soc.

<sup>3</sup> Mar. 6, 1828, *Macon Papers*, N. C. Hist. Soc.

<sup>4</sup> Nicholson, MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>5</sup> May 25, 1809, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>6</sup> Feb. 19, 1822, Bryan MSS.

<sup>7</sup> Aug. 23, 1823, Bryan MSS.

Some of these letters betray the excessive *ictus* of an eloquent and high-keyed nature; and all of them, we have no doubt, were written at times when Randolph's eyes had for some reason been abused to an unusual extent; for, throughout his life, he was an eager reader of all sorts of printed matter, and wrote in his own clear, painstaking handwriting, which, until the very last, never exhibited any sign of shattered nerves or bedimmed vision, thousands of letters which, only in the rarest instances, revealed the slightest vestige of hurry or negligence. But, perhaps, the most distressing infirmity from which Randolph suffered was his sleeplessness. "We passed our evenings together, or I may perhaps rather say, a good portion of the night," we are told by Randolph's companion, of 1803, from whom we have already quoted: "For he loved to sit up late because, as he was wont to say, the grave, not the bed, was the place of rest for him."<sup>1</sup>

In one of his letters to a friend, written immediately after the death of William Pinkney (*a*) in 1822, Randolph said: "I have not slept on an average two hours for the last 6 days."<sup>2</sup> "I cannot sleep," he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough, some four years later, and then the ever-glowing imagination adds: "Death shakes his dart at me."<sup>3</sup> In an earlier year, he wrote to Elizabeth T. Coalter, that he had gone to bed, "the night before at eleven and got not an hour's sleep, and that disturbed."

"Luckily on Friday," he continues, "I was so worn down that I went to bed before (by) sunset, fell asleep between seven and eight, and slept until three in the morning, with the exception of not more than half an hour towards the commencement of my nap, when I was waked to know if I wouldn't take coffee. It was God's mercy that I fell asleep again, or

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 173.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 170.

<sup>3</sup> Mar. 4, 1826, Garland, v. 2, 269.

the slight brain fever that has tormented me might have terminated in something worse than loss of life."<sup>1</sup>

When he was three or four years younger, he had jotted down in one of his briefer journals these words: "Slept last night by means of hot infusion and pillow."<sup>2</sup> "No sleep" was the short and pointed entry that he had made in another of these briefer journals some six months before.<sup>3</sup> Well might he have asked in the words of Comus: "What hath night to do with sleep?" "Rose at three," "Rose at one," "I've been up ever since half-past two,"—these are but some of the many entries and statements in his journals and letters which show that he was as familiar as a walking ghost with the deep waste and middle of the night.<sup>4</sup>

At times, Randolph's insomnia must have been trying not only to the servants who looked after his personal comfort at Washington, but to such of his friends as happened to be under the same roof with him during his nocturnal vigils. On this point, the testimony which Thomas H. Benton rendered in the Randolph will litigation is important; for, during the winter of 1821 to 1822, both he and Randolph boarded at Dawson's in Washington.

"He slept very little," Benton testified, "at times, he hardly seemed to sleep at all for nights together—and, at all hours of the night, was accustomed to tap at my door very softly—just enough for me to hear it (as he used to say) if I was awake, and not to wake me if I was asleep; but, being very wakeful myself, I usually heard his lightest tap, and always told him to come in. He would then sit on the bed and talk with me in the dark."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 18, 1822, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Aug. 15, 1818, Libr. Cong.

<sup>3</sup> *Va. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>4</sup> *Journal Va. Hist. Soc.*, Apr. 28, 1824, and May 9, 1824, and letter from J. R. to E. T. Coalter, Feb. 18, 1822.

<sup>5</sup> Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor., Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

With such lidless, dragon eyes as these, a good night's sleep is not a commonplace occurrence, but a voluptuous delight.

After the adjournment of Congress on March 3, 1823, Randolph hurried off to Oakland, the home of his friend, William R. Johnson, of Chesterfield County, Virginia, who was then looking forward eagerly to the great race between Eclipse and Henry, the pride of the North and South respectively, which was to come off on Long Island in the month of May, 1823. The change of scene, air, and mental occupation produced such a change in his state of health that he could describe a night that he had spent at Chesterfield Court House as if it had been a draught of sparkling wine.

"To that night," he said, "spent on a shuck mattress in a little garret room at Chesterfield Court House, Sunday, March, the 9th, 1823, I look back with delight. It was a stormy night. The windows clattered, and William R. Johnson got up several times to try and put a stop to the noise by thrusting a glove between the loose sashes. I heard the noise; I even heard him; but it did not disturb me; I enjoyed a sweet nap of eight hours, during which he said he never heard me breathe. N.B. I had fasted all day and supped (which I have not done since) on a soft egg and a bit of biscuit. My feelings next day were as new and delightful as those of any bride the day after her nuptials, and the impression (on memory at least) as strong."<sup>1</sup>  
(a)

The treatment and regimen upon which Randolph relied in combating illness deserve a word of comment. He once wrote to Nicholson that he was not willing to take anything from his physician except his advice.<sup>2</sup> When he first fell ill at Washington in 1817, he called in two physicians, but, later, he trusted to his own knowledge of the pharmacopœia to dose himself with medicines, among

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Bizarre, Jan. 24, 1810, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

which calomel, of which, in the course of his life he sometimes took as much as ten or twelve grains at a time,<sup>1</sup> was one.<sup>2</sup> "Drugs," he wrote to Nicholson, "are poison to me in any shape in which they can be administered; air, exercise and an undisturbed mind, essential to my very existence."<sup>3</sup> This is all intelligent enough; but the measure of his need for air would have been pronounced little better than aerophobia by Benjamin Franklin. "Don't be afraid of fresh air," Randolph wrote to Elizabeth T. Coalter, "my health is so bad that I can't recommend my example, yet I am persuaded it would be much worse if I did not raise my windows every morning by the first peep of day."<sup>4</sup> Often, he was driven by indigestion to a pitifully meagre diet; and how a man with such a delicate stomach could ever have smoked or drunk madeira it is hard to see, but smoke he did at some periods of his life, and drink madeira, with occasional intermissions, he certainly did down to the last years of his life.

On March 1, 1820, he wrote to John Randolph Bryan that he was confined to a strict milk diet. On December 15, 1827, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough:

"*Quant à moi*, I am dying as decently as I can. For three days past, I have rode out and people, who would not care one groat if I died to-night, are glad that I am so much better, etc., etc., with all that wretched grimace that grown-up makers of faces call, and believe to be, politeness, good breeding, etc. I had rather see the children or monkeys mow and chatter. My diet is strict, flesh once a day (mutton boiled or roasted), a cracker and cup of coffee morning and night. No drink but toast and water."<sup>5</sup>

In a letter to Littleton Waller Tazewell, Randolph even made fun of his toast and water. Speaking of a little

<sup>1</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 91.

<sup>3</sup> Mar. 16, 1808.

<sup>4</sup> Feb. 18, 1822, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>5</sup> Dec. 15, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 294.

dinner to which he had invited J. M. Garnett, Nathaniel Macon, and Mark Alexander, he says that he was drunker upon his toast and water and such thin potations than they were upon old *Jemaikey* and *Brarzil* at \$3.00, first cost, per bottle. "So you see," he goes on to say, "that, although a man of peace, I live like a fighting cock; for small hominy and water is the chief part of my diet."<sup>1</sup>

During the next year, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough that his breakfast consisted of a cup of tea and a cracker without butter which he never touched.<sup>2</sup> In the latter part of the same year, his stomach was still so intolerant of the slightest excess that he wrote to the same friend: "Kidder R. [Randolph] was here and had no one to join him in a glass of claret, so that, as Burns says, I helped him to a slice of my constitution, although my potation was very moderate."<sup>3</sup>

During Randolph's life, there was quite a general impression that he was not so infirm as he professed to be. It was difficult for skeptical minds to believe that a man could speak for hours in the House and ride for miles on horseback over the roughest roads and yet be as moribund as Randolph repeatedly insisted that he was. The occasion of which we have already spoken when he assured the Flournoyes that he was dying, and yet shortly afterwards galloped up behind them, on his way to Halifax Court House, where he delivered one of the most powerful speeches of his career, was by no means a solitary one. A similar incident was related by Wm. H. Roane, a member of the House from Virginia during the session of 1816-1817, when Randolph's health was so wretched.

"I remember," he says, "that one morning Mr. Lewis came into the House of Representatives and addressed Mr. Tyler and myself, who were the youngest members from Virginia,

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 8, 1826, Littleton Waller Tazewell, Jr., MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 20, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 284.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 4, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 293.

and said we must go to Georgetown to Mr. Randolph. We asked for what; he said that Mr. Randolph had told him that he was determined not to be buried as Beau Dawson had been at the public expense, and he had selected us young bloods to come to him and take charge of his funeral. We went over immediately. When we entered Mr. Randolph's apartment, he was in his morning gown. He rose and shook us by the hand. On our inquiries after his health, he said: 'Dying! Dying! Dying! In a dreadful state.' He inquired what was going on in Congress. We told him that the galleries were filling with people of the District and that there was considerable excitement on the rechartering of the batch of banks in the District. He then broke off, and commenced upon another subject, and pronounced a glowing eulogium upon the character and talents of Patrick Henry. After sitting for sometime, and nothing being said on the business on which we had been sent to him, we rose and took our leave. When we got to the door, I said: 'I wish, Mr. Randolph, you could be in the House today.' He shook his head—'Dying, Sir, Dying!' When we had got back to the House of Representatives, Mr. Lewis came in and asked how we had found Mr. Randolph. We laughed and said, as well as usual—that we had spent a very pleasant morning with him, and been much amused by his conversation. Scarcely a moment after, Mr. Lewis exclaimed: 'There he is!' and there, to be sure, he was. He had entered by another door, having arrived at the Capitol almost as soon as we did. In a few moments, he arose and commenced a speech, the first sentence of which I can repeat verbatim: 'Mr. Speaker,' said he, 'This is Shrove Tuesday. Many a gallant cock has died in the pit on this day, and I have come to die in the pit also.' He then went on with his speech and, after a short time, turned and addressed the crowd of 'hungry expectants,' as he called them—tellers, clerks and porters in the gallery."<sup>1</sup>

In bringing out Randolph's life-long ill-health, in connection with his infirmities of temper, there is a kindred subject, which, delicate as it is, we cannot avoid. So far

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 92.



as we know, there is no written evidence to establish the fact that he was devoid of virility at the time of his death; but that he was so cannot admit of a doubt. The writer remembers being told by his father, a resident of Charlotte County, born in 1826, that in some form or other, the exact nature of which he has forgotten, one of the physicians who attended Randolph, during his last illness, communicated to the world the fact that an examination of Randolph's sexual organs after his death had demonstrated his impotence, and was severely criticized by public opinion for doing so. The writer regrets that his memory cannot be more specific; but upon the accuracy of what he does recall the reader can confidently rely. Moreover, he has recently been told by an aged member of the Baltimore Bar, of the very highest standing, that he remembers distinctly reading a letter, written by a Philadelphia doctor to Walter Jones, an ancestor of his, when Jones was one of the counsel in the Randolph will litigation, in which this doctor stated that a post mortem inspection made by him had shown that Randolph's testicles at the time of his death were mere rudiments. These facts simply confirm a popular impression which was universal during the latter part of Randolph's life. Three times at least during his career did men who had been exasperated by his satirical eloquence retaliate with more keenness than decency by hinting at his lack of virile force. One of these men was Daniel Sheffey, a conspicuous and able member of Congress from Virginia, from 1809-1817, who began life as a shoemaker, and is said to have received on one occasion from Randolph the stinging advice, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*, to which he is said to have happily replied that "if that gentleman had *ever been* on a shoemaker's bench, *he never would have left it.*"<sup>1</sup> Just what Sheffey said in the attack on Randolph, to which we allude, we can only infer from Randolph's answer. It

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Colls. of Va.*, by Howe, 179.



was personal enough, however, to incite Randolph, after he had thrice been prevented by the Speaker from making the reply that he thought proper, to write to his friend, T. M. Nelson, another member of Congress, what he had intended to say, with a view to its passing into general circulation. The circumstances, under which he proposed to hurl his bolt, were a little too suggestive of the individual who, despite all that he was in the habit of saying about the grand way in which his aristocratic ancestors had lived, had nothing better to display than a paper sketch of the splendid house that one of them had intended to build; and, moreover, the production smells a little of the lamp; something that can rarely be said of Randolph's "profuse strains of unpremeditated art"; but the words drafted by Randolph are nevertheless pointed enough to merit free transcription:

"The honorable gentleman, who dives with all the alacrity of a familiar of the Inquisition into the death-bed thoughts of other men, has pronounced, with an arrogance unusual even with him, that I, Sir, am never to be blessed with any of those pledges of domestic happiness of whose true value he knows so little as to expose them without regard to the delicacy of sex, or to the tenderness of infancy (a piteous spectacle), to the public eye. The honorable gentleman *has heard* of conjugal love and therefore, talks about it; but it is plain that he has never felt that tender and ennobling passion. All his knowledge upon this subject is matter of hearsay, not of feeling; a cold conception of the head, or the mere impulse of appetite, and not a generous sentiment of the heart. But, Sir, what does the honorable gentleman mean? I shall not affect to misunderstand his gross and beastly allusion, the production not indeed of twenty years' but of twenty-four hours' 'lucubrations.' There is no necessity to strip this obscene figure of its drapery, for it has not even the covering of a fig leaf. Does the honorable gentleman mean to boast *here in this place* a superiority over me in those parts of our nature which we partake in common with the brutes? I readily yield it to him.

I doubt not his animal propensities or endowments. He has shown that of the noblest gift of God to man he, with the wretched disciples of the school of materialism, comprehends so much, and so much only, as is physical in this compound, heavenly passion. And is it for him to talk of 'filth' thrown upon his character or his person? And is it for any such man to pronounce of *any language*, that has been, or that *can be, uttered* on this floor that it is disorderly or unparliamentary, when these lewd and detestable conceptions, that revolt us in the indignant pages of Juvenal, are not only endured but more than tolerated, not in the constuprated court of a Tiberius, a Nero or an Heliogabulus, not in the City of Capreæ, or the Grove of Daphne but in the Halls of an American Congress. This Sir, is a conflict, (from which I gladly retire) with one of those animals whose effluvia are as formidable as their other powers of annoyance are despicable."<sup>1</sup>

Much less elaborate but more effective was the reply which Randolph has always been believed in Virginia to have made to another person who sought to cast upon him the same reproach as Sheffey. "You pride yourself upon an animal faculty, in respect to which the negro is your equal and the jackass infinitely your superior." Another assailant who sought to wound Randolph in the same vulnerable particular, was "Julius" (Richard Rush), one paragraph of whose exclamatory tirade reminds us of the titter with which James Thomson's ejaculatory line

"O! Sophonisba, Sophonisba, O!"

was greeted when first spoken on the stage. "The fountain of man's highest transports and holiest affections was, alas! unknown to him. O! heavy malediction. O! sufficient to have awakened commiseration for his lot, were it not averted by the sense of his own transgressions."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *John Randolph at Home and Abroad*, by Julius, p. 13.

And, in another place, overcome with what he conceived to be the lack of usefulness in Randolph's career, Julius breaks out, this time not so infelicitously. "All, all was sterility, as if under his barren star there could be no offspring."<sup>1</sup>

Still another assailant of the same kind was Tristram Burges, of Rhode Island, who is said to have set down Randolph in debate on one occasion as "hated of men and scorned by women."<sup>2</sup> (a) Such taunts as these, of course, belong to a stage of human development when sexual incompetency was a reproach as well as a misfortune; but, now that women are so much on a footing of parity in every respect with men, it is hard to see why sterility should be a source of sorrow only to one sex but impotence a source of shame as well as of sorrow to the other; to be resented, when imputed, with the indignation with which Mrs. Quickly repelled the idea that she was not an "honest woman."

That Randolph was congenitally impotent, however, we do not believe. On the contrary, we entertain no doubt that his want of masculine vigor in his later life was caused by mumps or some other wasting disease,<sup>3</sup> and that, in his early life, his sexual integrity was wholly intact. In the discussion of this topic, stress has sometimes been laid upon the fact that Randolph was beardless; but was he beardless? It is certain at all events that, in one of his communications to John Randolph Clay, he speaks of having been in the habit of shaving himself when he was a youth in Philadelphia.<sup>4</sup> And so, in the same manner, significance is also sometimes attached to the fact that he had a soprano voice. But a feminine voice no more than

<sup>1</sup> *John Randolph at Home and Abroad*, by Julius, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> *The Life of Thurlow Weed*, by Thurlow Weed Barnes, v. 1, 382.

<sup>3</sup> *The Charlottesville Progress*, Aug. 26, 1918.

<sup>4</sup> Paper headed "June, 1830," and "Memo. of Finances," *Clay Papers*, Libr. Cong.

a feminine face necessarily implies impotence. It is incredible that a man as incomplete from birth as Randolph is supposed to have been could have written to a youthful companion in terms of ardent attachment about one member of the opposite sex; or have cherished the deepest gratitude to a friend for extricating him from an entanglement with another; or should have been told by a cousin, who had grown up in the same family circle with him, that he had been in love with her; or should have actually become engaged to one of the most beautiful women of his time; or should have been the subject of an effort, however feeble, by one of his most intimate friends to bring about a match between him and a young woman, or even should have given expression to sensations which nothing but amorous desire is capable of producing; yet all these things Randolph did. When in his eighteenth year, he wrote to his friend Henry Rutledge: "You well know my sentiments on a certain subject. They are still the same. A pin for existence without her; but I will drop a subject which never fails to demand the tribute of a sigh."<sup>1</sup> In the same letter, Randolph said: "That man who is possessed of the religion to which I allude, together with a competent fortune, a sincere friend, a refined feeling, and superior to them all, of an amiable partner of his affections; that man, if such a one exists, must be happy." A few months later, Randolph wrote to the same friend:

"I hope, my dear Rutledge, that you have recovered of the fever by which you were so incommoded when I saw you last. I am afraid that some cruel fair has occasioned this disease. If so, I advise you to take courage and hope for the best; or, if matters are in such a train as not to admit of any hope, to follow your own advice to me, or rather old Syphax', which you quote very aptly, 'Let a second mistress light up another flame and put out this.'"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 24, 1791.

<sup>2</sup> July 16, 1791.

The inferences suggested by such confidences as these are too obvious to require comment.

The author of the sketch of Randolph in *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography*, when dwelling upon his youthful life in Philadelphia, says:

"Among his unpublished letters are several that indicate a temporary lapse into gambling and other dissipations about this time; and suggest an estrangement, if not indeed a marriage, in Philadelphia as the explanation of the rupture of his engagement with the famous beauty, Maria Ward, whose marriage (to Peyton, only son of Edmund Randolph) completed the tragedy of his private life."<sup>1</sup>

A tradition to this effect has come down in the Tucker family connection; and it is even so confident as to declare that the woman was an English woman, and named Hester Hargrave; but, so far as we know, the only really substantial and authentic evidence upon this point is to be found in an unpublished letter from Randolph to his niece.

"You know," he wrote, "that Mr. Bryan and myself were bound together by the closest ties, but I never told you, and meant to do it upon paper, what was the basis of the friendship that made us as one soul and body. I saved him from marriage, when under age, with a woman as beautiful as the morning who was in the best society in Philadelphia, but whose mother kept a boarding-house and knew her true character. One hour more would have consigned my friend to the arms of infamy. I rescued him at the hazard of my life; for I am satisfied that he would have cut my throat, if I had not established her falsehood to him. She married that very day the object of her real attachment, and died an outcast in a hospital at Cadiz. My friend forgot, or at least got over, his boyish attachment and, after a second escape from a vixen and coquette in 1799-1800, he went to Europe, returned, and, in 1805, married a beautiful and virtuous woman, the mother of

<sup>1</sup> V. 5, 178.

two sons and three daughters who dedicated her widowhood from 1812 until 1826, when she died, to his children. To me Mr. Bryan rendered a service not precisely of the same but somewhat analogous nature of which some day or other I will give you the strange history. He rescued me from a state that must have driven me to madness; to worse if possible. I must end."<sup>1</sup>

This letter was written five years before Randolph's death, and, as his affectionate intimacy with his niece continued until the last scrap of paper, on which he ever wrote a line, dropped from his nerveless fingers, he, doubtless, redeemed his promise to her, and, in that way, handed down to the Grinnans, her descendants of our own day, the tradition which we have mentioned. There are few beloved nieces, we imagine, who would not sit in the lap of a gray-headed uncle, like Vivien in the lap of Merlin, until she had wheedled from the cells of his memory such a secret as this.

We have already seen that Nancy Randolph in her reply to Randolph claimed that he had once made the approaches of a lover to her; and, if he had been deficient in the full measure of vital energy at that time, the nature of her reply is certainly such as to warrant the belief that she would have been quick to give additional edge to her cutting words in this connection by at least a veiled reference to the physical feature of Randolph's body which, for the purpose of paper battles, corresponded with the heel of Achilles. In consequence of the disposition of the true Virginian to adopt the advice that was given to Uncle Toby by the father of Tristram Shandy that nothing is so serious as love, much more has been made of Randolph's engagement to Maria Ward than the incident really justified. Pretty much all that we actually know of her is that she was the daughter of Mrs. Benjamin Ward, of Winterpock, in Chesterfield County; that she was

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 27, 1828, Bryan MSS.

a superior woman in point of personal charms, intelligence, and character; that Randolph became engaged to her; that for some reason the engagement was broken off, and that she became the wife of Peyton Randolph, the son of Edmund Randolph, Washington's Attorney General and Secretary of State, and the ancestress of more than one living Virginian who has honorably met the obligations cast upon him by his descent from her and her husband. Why the engagement was broken off is not known; but, so far as we are aware, the mysterious and high-flown innuendoes by which Garland conveys the suggestion that it was because Randolph was physically disqualified for marriage are not sustained by any evidence. Our own belief is that the marriage never took place because rumors of the affair in which Randolph had become involved in Philadelphia, that perhaps even represented it as amounting to a marriage, came to the ears of Maria Ward and her mother (then Mrs. General Everard Meade). To this belief we are brought not only by the intrinsic probability of the idea itself under the circumstances, but by a letter to Randolph from one of his intimate friends, William Thompson.

"Repose on thy pillow," wrote Thompson, all of whose little fishes habitually talked like big whales, "and heed not the shafts that are thrown against you. The world has not injured me, and it has not despised you. Mrs. M. [Meade] assured me that in your honor she placed the most implicit confidence. When you communicate with M—a [Maria], as probably you have already done, she will declare herself unaffected by this tale which has disturbed your peace. I have spoken with candor, but I have spoken with truth. Demand the author and, if he be given up, you will find it a child. The time of telling it the month of August.

"Alas, my brother, what are not you destined to suffer! What tremendous trials of fortitude have you not undergone! In the enthusiasm of friendship, I look forward to your happiness and



each day brings to life some new pang which is unfeelingly inflicted. Let not this affair make too deep an impression on your mind—command my circumstances if they be required; for be assured that the mind which personifies irregularity and want of system in the affairs of the world is nerved to act with dauntless energy in the cause of my brother.”<sup>1</sup>

Of course, this sort of language is vague, but “the tale,” to which it refers, hardly points to such a thing as a physical impediment to marriage. That Randolph, one of the proudest and least designing of men, should have been charged by the tongue of scandal with an intended imposture which was certain of exposure on the very first night of marriage, and that Mrs. Meade should have relied upon Randolph’s honor to protect her daughter against such deceit is assuredly an hypothesis, entirely too bold to be accepted except in the total absence of any other plausible one. We might add that the conclusion to which we lean coincides with that which the late Moncure Conway, a close student of this episode in Randolph’s life, was inclined to adopt.

“Does it not seem,” he said, in a letter to the late Joseph Bryan, of Richmond, “there must have been a previous love affair when he (Randolph) was in Philadelphia (1790–95), and that the ‘tales’ (Garland I, 182) about him may have referred to some entanglement and been the means of breaking off the engagement with Maria Ward? The rupture has generally been ascribed, I know, to a physical cause, but I have always had doubts as to that.”<sup>2</sup>

And, after all, what more natural than that at the last moment Maria Ward might have decided, even after “the tale” had been cleared up, not to marry Randolph because of misgivings implanted in her mind by his eccentric character and habits and his ill-regulated temper?

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. I, 182.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 27, 1888, Bryan MSS.



That the image of Maria Ward remained lastingly impressed upon Randolph's mind is certain.

"My situation has been for sometime past (as you know) a peculiar one," he wrote to Theodore Dudley on Nov. 15, 1807, which was about seven years after his engagement to her had been broken off. "The persons (yourself excepted) from whom I had deserved most highly; to whom I had dedicated the best years of my life, had withdrawn their confidence from me. To one of these [Judith Randolph] I had devoted the prime of my manhood; another (I blush to tell it!) I loved better than my own soul or Him who created it! [Maria Ward.] What I merited from the third I will not say. Two of them had descended to speak injuriously and even *falsely* (as it respected one of these two) concerning me. My heart was wounded to the very core. These persons have since confessed that they were under the influence of paltry irritations and that, in their dispassionate moments, they never felt or expressed a thought that was injurious to me. An incident, however, of disingenuousness and want of confidence, the most inexcusable, has lately occurred in one of them, or rather the knowledge of it occurred to me; for the matter was of some years' standing."<sup>1</sup>

Words like these plainly import reparable injuries, not irreparable ones founded on physical facts that no explanation or apology could alter. Later on, we shall quote a still bitterer reference to the disappointment that Randolph's love for Maria Ward had inflicted upon him. How deeply his attachment was reciprocated by her we have nothing but his own testimony to tell us. He is said to have declared on one occasion: "I loved, aye, and was loved again; not wisely but too well."<sup>2</sup> Indeed, we know that his friend Benjamin Watkins Leigh deprecated the free extent to which Randolph was in the habit of giving expression to the gratification that he felt at having once possessed the love of Maria Ward. As to the true state

<sup>1</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 76.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 5.

of her feeling towards Randolph, we only know, apart from his own testimony, that it is said by her descendants that she felt enough interest in him to the last to make up a package of his love letters to her, and formally, on her death-bed, to request her executors to preserve them; a request which it is said that they had too much of the Virginian squeamishness about the sanctity of private correspondence to comply with.<sup>1</sup> Randolph was so richly endowed with imagination and sentiment that it is hard to reconcile ourselves to such a loss. It is barely possible, of course, that a man, incapable of consummating the marriage rite, might seek the hand of a lovely woman and marry her, or, being disappointed of marriage, speak of his love for her years afterwards in words of glowing passion; but reasoning deduced from such solecisms in human conduct is so alien to Randolph's character and position in life as hardly to deserve consideration.

Joseph H. Nicholson was intimate with Randolph in 1801 and, as a member of the House, must have been brought into the closest contact from day to day with Randolph's colleagues from Virginia. Surely, if such a famous man as Randolph even then was had been subject to sexual deformity from his birth—a thing that would certainly have become known to every servant in the Matoax household, and to every white or negro boy with whom he ever "went in washing," as Virginia boys still say—they would have heard of that fact; and Nicholson too through them. Yet on October 1, 1801, we find Randolph writing to Nicholson in terms which unmistakably indicate that Nicholson had selected a certain person as a proper wife for him who happened to be an object of desire to some gallant major.

"You were entirely wrong in your conjecture," Randolph wrote, "altho I think Miss M. a fine woman, nay, uncommonly

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Berkeley Williams to the Author, dated Sept. 5, 1919.

so, I could practice without any forbearance the precept of my schoolmaster on this occasion: '*Cede majoribus*,' and, if you will excuse the pun, I assure you that 'his majoralty' has naught to fear from my quarter if his pretensions lie that way. I would hardly answer as much for his advanced age and some other little etceteras."<sup>1</sup>

Scattered, too, through Randolph's letters are expressions that could hardly have dropped from the pen of a man who did not at least have recollections of erotic sensations which nothing but Love, the physical brother of Food, Drink, and Sleep, as well as the spiritual mother of some of the purest, tenderest, and loftiest emotions of the human soul, can kindle in the human frame. For illustration, in a letter to Theodore Dudley, Randolph moralized in this fashion:

"Rely upon it that to love a woman as 'a mistress,' although a delicious delirium, an intoxication far surpassing that of champagne, is altogether unessential, nay *pernicious*, in the choice of a wife; which a man ought to set about in his sober senses—choosing her as Mrs. Primrose did her wedding gown, for qualities that 'wear well.'"<sup>2</sup>

Randolph might have stolen the pipe of Pan, but could he have sounded a note like this, unless he had previously stolen some of Pan's fruitful fire too?

And is it possible that Joseph Bryan, who shared Randolph's early dissipations in Philadelphia, roomed with him, and was united to him by ties of devoted friendship, "body and soul," to use Randolph's phrase, could have written such words as these to Randolph about his wife and the mother of John Randolph Bryan, Randolph's godson, if Randolph had not been able in his early manhood at any rate to feel with Coleridge that

<sup>1</sup> Oct. 1, 1801, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 252.

"All thoughts, all passions, all delights,  
What ever stirs this mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of love  
And serve to feed his sacred flame."

"Your *facsimile* Randolph is said by my wife to be a prodigy. I can pass no opinion, for my deafness prevents my hearing his performance. I regret it very much on that account. I can pass tolerably well in company; indeed, I believe my hearing is nearly as good as when I was in Washington, but it is not equal to the small tenor of an infant voice. If you had not been far removed at a certain period, I should have supposed the possibility of acting Othello. Come and see him."<sup>1</sup>

Nor should we forget in fixing the degree of responsibility to which Randolph's infirmities of temper should be held that his mind was at certain periods of his life positively deranged; and at others so nearly so that it was hard to say whether his mental condition was normal or not; for rarely has any human being ever furnished a more striking illustration of the saying that great wits to madness are near allied.

A special study of the manner in which his mind occasionally slipped its cogs might, it seems to us, prove an instructive task for an alienist. It never crumbled as something crumbles when it has been slowly decomposed; nor did it ever fly to pieces like something that has been revolved too rapidly. Even at a time after his return from Russia, when he was manifestly mad, he had the practical sense to negotiate successfully for the purchase of a tract of land that belonged to one of his Roanoke neighbors—Elisha Hundley.<sup>2</sup> His conversation was never more brilliant than it often was when it was perfectly plain to his companion that his wits were disordered.<sup>3</sup> (a) His

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 1, 1812, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Depositions in Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor., Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

mind seemed to get away from him as a horse sometimes passes from the control of his rider that begins to gallop in an entirely natural manner; but, spurred more and more by the excitement that he generates in his own nervous system as he moves, finally flies off at what we call a mad rate of speed, which continues until both limb and wind succumb to exhaustion; slowly succeeded in turn by the restoration of former conditions. (*a*) Letters have come down to us that were written by Randolph in all sorts of mental states; some when his general conduct was such as to establish irrefragably his insanity; but it was only after the adjournment of the Virginia Constitutional Convention that he lost at intervals his marvelous gift for terse, vivid expression and fell to chattering like poor Ophelia. Here is a high-wrought letter to Elizabeth T. Coalter plainly written when his spirits were unnaturally exalted, and his eye was glistening with cerebral fever, but his brain was still serviceably steady:

"Saturday, March 25, 1826.

"MY DEAR CHILD.

"This is possibly the last letter that you shall receive from me until I am liberated from my prison-house. Nine hours quill driving per day is too much. I give up all my correspondents for a time, even your Uncle Henry. I must not kill myself outright. Business, important business, now demands every faculty of my soul and body. If I fail, if I perish, I shall have fallen in a noble cause—not the cause of my country only but a dearer one even than that—the cause of my friend and colleague [Tazewell]. Had he been here, I should never have suffered and done what I have done and suffered for his sake; and what I would not undergo again for anything short of the Kingdom of Heaven. You mistake my character altogether. I am not ambitious; I have no thirst for power. That is ambition. Or for the fame that newspapers etc. can confer. There is nothing worldly worth having (save a real friend and that I have had) but the love of an amiable and sensible woman; one who loves with heart and not with her head out of

romances and plays. That I once had. It is gone never to return, and it changed and became—my God! To what vile uses do we come at last! I now refer you to the scene in Shakespeare, first part of Henry IV at Warworth Castle, where Lady Percy comes in upon Hotspur who had been reading the letter of his candid friend. Read the whole of it from the soliloquy to the end of it. ‘This (I borrow his words) is no world to play with mammetts and to tilt with lips.’ It is for fribbles and Narcissus and [illegible], idle worthless drones who encumber the lap of society, who never did and never will do anything but admire themselves in a glass, or look at their own legs; it is for them to skulk when friends and country are in danger. Hector and Hotspur must take the field and go to the death. The volcano is burning me up and, as Calanthe died dancing, so may I die speaking. But my country and my friends shall never see my back in the field of danger or the hour of death. Continue to write to me but do not expect an answer until my engagements of duty are fulfilled.”<sup>1</sup>

It would seem that Randolph’s mind never became really demented before the year 1818; though in the very beginning of his political career his bearing was occasionally so peculiar as to suggest the idea to others that it was unhinged. Nor should the fact be overlooked that Dr. Samuel Merry testified in the Randolph will litigation that Randolph was deranged for several weeks at Roanoke in 1811 or 1812.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, in that litigation the testimony of Dr. Robinson, who, however, had formed a personal grudge against Randolph, went almost to the point of saying that the latter was out of his mind on each of the three or four occasions between 1810 and 1819 when he met him. But in 1818, just after the dreadful attack of illness which for years afterwards furnished Randolph with his low water-mark when he was noting fluctuations in his health, Randolph was certainly not himself. In

<sup>1</sup> Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Coalter’s Exor. vs. Randolph’s Exor., Clk’s office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

1820, when his extravagant conduct at the funeral of Commodore Stephen Decatur attracted general attention, his mental faculties were beyond doubt gravely affected. In the month of April in that year he walked into the United States Branch Bank at Richmond and asked for writing materials with which to make out a check. When they were given to him, he dipped his pen in the ink and, finding that it was black, asked for red ink, saying, "I now go for blood." He filled the check up and asked Mr. Anderson, the bank cashier, to sign it. Mr. Anderson refused, and, after importuning him for some time to change his mind, Randolph called for black ink, and signed John Randolph of Roanoke, X, his mark. He then called for the porter and sent the check to a Mr. Taylor's for the purpose of paying an account.<sup>1</sup>

"One day," says Mr. Anderson, "I was passing along the street when Mr. Randolph hailed me in a louder voice than usual. The first question he asked me was whether I knew of a good ship in the James River in which he could get a passage for England. I told him there were no ships here fit for his accommodation; and that he had better go to New York and sail from that port. 'Do you think,' said he, 'I would give my money to those who are ready to make my negroes cut my throat—if I cannot go to England from a Southern port I will not go at all.' I then endeavored to think of the best course for him to take and told him there was a ship in the river. He asked the name of the ship. I told him it was the *Henry Clay*. He threw up his arms and exclaimed: '*Henry Clay*! No, sir! I will never step on the planks of a ship of that name!' He then appointed to meet me at the bank at 9 o'clock. He came at the hour, drew several checks, exhausted his funds in the bank and asked me for a settlement of his account, saying he had no longer any confidence in the State Banks and not much in the Bank of the United States; and that he would draw all his funds out of the bank and put them in English guineas—that there was no danger of them."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 137.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



Testifying in the Randolph will litigation as to the difference between the insanity of Randolph in 1818 and 1820 and his insanity in 1831 and 1832, Judge Leigh said:

“There were two previous periods when I had seen him as I thought out of his mind—the first was, I think, in 1818 and the second the summer after the death of Commodore Decatur, which was, I believe, in 1820. In the first period, his derangement seemed to be an extreme religious excitement, and, although I believe his mind was disordered, yet I doubt whether he was then incompetent to manage his affairs or to make a will. He was during this period remarkably mild in his manners and seemed most anxious to bring about a reconciliation with all with whom he had a difference; and he was much more attentive to the management of his negroes and plantation than I ever knew him to be at any other period before or since. He seemed to have laid aside or mastered all the asperity of his character, nor do I know, nor have I heard, that he exhibited during this period any violent passion but on two occasions. On one of these occasions, I heard he took offence at a stranger who, at his table, proposed to buy of him one of his servants who was waiting on the table, and that then he exhibited the extremity of passion; threatening and perhaps attempting to shoot the man. Mr. Edward Cabell was, according to the information I have received, then present. And, in October in the same year in Lynchburg, he exhibited violent resentment towards Mr. Christopher Clark. During the same period, as I have heard and have no doubt, he used to collect his negroes together on Sunday and read to them portions of the Bible which he endeavored to explain to them by verbal remarks. And, during the same period, whenever I was at his house, he had prayers, night and morning, at which his house servants were always present. The disorder of his mind in 1820 was, in my opinion, much more obvious, and was of a totally different character—exhibiting at almost all times angry and vindictive feelings, with few exceptions, against most of his acquaintances and persons with whom he had any intercourse. And, during the height of the malady,



I did not then, nor do I now, think he was competent to do any important business.”<sup>1</sup>

Thomas H. Benton testified in the Randolph will litigation that during the winter of 1821 to 1822 he saw in Randolph “indications of high excitement and of unsettled mind, amounting as he believed to mental alienation.” The tokens of mental unsoundness, he thought, “were extreme talking, sleeplessness, and giving undue, or even mysterious, importance to trifles.”

“He talked almost incessantly,” Benton declared. “I remember a particular instance of seven hours at a time—from 4 in the afternoon until 11 at night. His talk was always beautiful and brilliant, but out of place, and too much of it, and wholly different from what it had been the winter before.”<sup>2</sup>

Benton further testified that, when Randolph returned from England in 1822, he was “calm, self-possessed, poised, everything right, natural, and proper.”<sup>3</sup> Referring to Randolph’s chronic ill-health, and to his testimony in the will case, Benton also makes these additional observations on his sanity in his *Thirty Years’ View*:

“Such life-long suffering must have its effect on the temper and on the mind; and it had on his, bringing the temper often to the querulous mood and the state of his mind sometimes to the question of insanity—a question which became judicial after his death when the validity of his will came to be contested. I had my opinion on the point and gave it responsibly in a deposition, duly taken to be read on the trial of the will, and in which a belief in his insanity at several specified periods was fully expressed; with the reasons for the opinion. I had good opportunities of forming an opinion; living in the same

<sup>1</sup> Coalter’s Exor. vs. Randolph’s Exor., Clk’s office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>2</sup> Coalter’s Exor. vs. Randolph’s Exor., Clk’s Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

house with him several years; having his confidence and seeing him at all hours of the day and night. It also on several occasions became my duty to study the question with a view to govern my own conduct under critical circumstances. Twice he applied to me to carry challenges for him. It would have been inhuman to have gone out with a man not in his right mind, and critical to one's self, as any accident on the ground might seriously compromise the second. My opinion was fixed of occasional temporary aberrations of mind; and, during such periods, he would do and say strange things, but always in his own way, not only method but genius in his fantasies; nothing to bespeak a bad heart but only exaltation and excitement. The most brilliant talk that I ever heard from him came forth on such occasions—a flow for hours (at one time 7 hours) of copious wit and classic allusion—a perfect scattering of the diamonds of the mind. I heard a friend remark on one of these occasions: 'He has wasted intellectual jewelry enough here this evening to equip many speakers for great orations.' I once sounded him on the delicate point of his own opinion of himself; of course, when he was in a perfectly natural state, and when he had said something to permit an approach to such a subject. It was during his last visit to Washington two winters before he died. It was in my room, in the gloom of the evening light, as the day was going out, and the lamps not lit—no one present but ourselves—he reclining on a sofa, silent and thoughtful, speaking but seldom and I only in reply, I heard him repeat, as if to himself, these lines from Johnson (which in fact I had often heard from him before) on 'Senility and Imbecility,' which show us life under its most melancholy forms:

“ ‘In life's last scenes, what prodigies surprise!  
Fears of the brave and follies of the wise.  
From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,  
And Swift expires a driv'ler and a show!’

When he had thus repeated these lines, which he did with deep feeling, and in slow and measured cadence, I deemed it excusable to make a remark of a kind which I had never ventured on

before, and said: 'Mr. Randolph, I have several times heard you repeat these lines as if they could have an application to yourself, while no person can have less reason to fear the fate of Swift.' I said this to sound him and to see what he thought of himself. His answer was: 'I have lived in dread of insanity.' That answer was the opening of a sealed book—revealed to me the source of much mental agony that I had seen him undergo. I did deem him in danger of the fate of Swift, and from the same cause, as judged by his latest and greatest biographer, Sir Walter Scott."<sup>1</sup>

An interesting note to a part of these words might be made of the fact that, in a letter to Judge Brooke, Henry Clay, after his duel with Randolph in 1826, said that the only thing which had made him hesitate about challenging Randolph was his misgivings as to Randolph's sanity.<sup>2</sup> More than one expression in Randolph's letters bears out the idea that he carried about with him a brooding fear of insanity; and, when he had recovered from one of his spells of mental aberration, no one was more cognizant than he of what his true condition had been. Dr. Thomas Robinson testified in the Randolph will litigation that, when Randolph passed through Petersburg in 1833 on his way to Philadelphia, he told the doctor that, since the latter had last seen him, he had been "stark mad, as well entitled to a cell in Swift's hospital as anyone who had ever occupied one"; and "that he felt conscious that he had not entirely recovered as yet, but confident of ultimate and perfect recovery."<sup>3</sup>

In the year 1826, Randolph was again overtaken by the foul fiend who pursued him (to use his own phrase). It was in that year that he made the long and multifarious, though brilliant, and, in some instances, sagacious,

<sup>1</sup> V. 1, p. 473.

<sup>2</sup> *Life & Times of Henry Clay*, by Calvin Colton, v. 2, 262.

<sup>3</sup> *Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor.*, Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

speeches in the Senate which helped his party enemies in the Virginia Legislature to compass his defeat, as a candidate for re-election. As usual, his loss of mind was concomitant with a very low state of physical health. On Feb. 27, 1826, he said in a letter: "The fever and the toast and water (I touch nothing else) keeps me more intoxicated (exhilarated rather) than two bottles of champagne." It is a curious fact that, when testifying in the Randolph will litigation, no recognition could be extorted from John C. Calhoun of the fact that Randolph had ever been subject to spells of insanity. The dark future of the South had been irradiated by several of Randolph's speeches too warningly for a man, to whom that future meant so much, to push Randolph aside as a crack-brained Cassandra. "Mr. Randolph," Calhoun said, "was generally regarded as a man of remarkable genius and great brilliancy, with uncommon sagacity and keenness in debate, and distinguished colloquial powers." Calhoun further testified that he had no recollection of any act or word of Randolph which induced him to suspect him of insanity, or of such aberrations of mind, permanent or occasional, as would incapacitate him to make a will or contract or to manage his private affairs. The most that he could say was that Randolph was more excited at some periods than at others; more so than was usual with most men; that he was most excited about the period of the death of Commodore Decatur (in 1820) and during the discussion of the Panama Question in the Senate during the session of 1825-26 (when Calhoun presided over the Senate as Vice-President, and sat as motionless as a figure of bronze or marble, while Randolph was speaking hour after hour). But Calhoun also testified that he had never, as he recollected, had any correspondence with Randolph except in the form of casual and ordinary notes; that the intercourse between him and Randolph generally was as a rule not more intimate than that which usually exists between

persons standing in similar official and political relations, and was, therefore, of a nature to afford him but few opportunities for observing his peculiar character, temper, habits of life and deportment towards his personal friends other than such as were afforded by such relations.<sup>1</sup>

The dementia of 1826 culminated, during that year, when Randolph was at sea, on his way to England, in a scandalous altercation between him and Captain Baldwin of the packet-ship, *Alexander*, which got into the newspapers, and, doubtless, did his standing as an United States Senator no little harm.

One night, the Captain found him upon deck, conversing with Mr. Matthews, the second mate. In a newspaper statement, Randolph said that the first intimation that he had of the Captain's presence was an "abrupt, angry, and insolent reprimand for violating the discipline of the ship by speaking to the officer on watch"; which, with the proper allowance for a nature that readily magnified social offenses, was, doubtless, true enough, if Randolph was not too distracted at the time to remember the circumstances accurately; for the salt ocean and not rose-water, as we all know, is the element on which the autocrat of the quarter-deck sails; and that this sea-dog was as jealous of his authority as most members of his class is attested by the fact that, in his newspaper reply to Randolph, he made distinctly more than he might have done of Randolph's answer to his threat to make him responsible to him when they got ashore, "Barking dogs do not bite." But it is only just to Captain Baldwin to recall exactly what he had to say about Randolph on this voyage in his statement; nor ought it to discredit Randolph to do so; because, on the whole voyage, his manifestations of mental irresponsibility were such as to remind us with singular precision of some of the forms that his insanity

<sup>1</sup> Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor., Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

assumed during the winter of 1831-1832. The Captain says that, before the *Alexander* sailed from Newcastle, Randolph refused to pay any steamboat fare to Philadelphia because he had been taken to Philadelphia against his will; that this fare was actually paid by one of Randolph's fellow-passengers "to prevent difficulty or detention"; that, no sooner had Randolph gained the deck of the *Alexander* at Newcastle, than he proceeded to give vent to the irritation awakened in him by hearing one passenger ask another whether Mr. Randolph had paid his steamboat fare; that, when Randolph got to sea, his querulous disposition manifested itself in such a variety of ways as to defy description; that it mainly exhibited itself in contradiction, severity of remark, profanity, vulgarity, and even obscenity; that, indeed, as regards the latter, such was his language that the two gentlemen passengers, who had their families with them, actually desired the Captain to have a separate table for the ladies in their own cabin; and that the Captain was obliged to assure them that, if Randolph did not mend his manners, he should have another apartment and table for his own private use. Captain Baldwin, after thus cleverly preventing Randolph from making an isolated occurrence of his colloquy with him, takes up that incident in these words:

"Out of such conduct, which was either alienation of mind or influence of drink, grew the affair on deck, which he (Randolph) has so generously requested should be taken and judged by itself without any *irrelevant* matter. This *irrelevant* matter is nothing more or less than general abuse of everything and everybody. It was his custom to go upon deck late at night, and there interfere with the discipline of the ship by diverting the attention of officers, helmsmen and watch; a practice which neither master nor passengers, as far as my experience goes, will approve; nor, while I am governed by my present views of duty to my owners, my passengers and myself, will I

permit. On this occasion, I politely requested him not to do so, and was treated in the vulgar manner he has publicly acknowledged. The officer of the deck afterwards told me he remained in the precise position I left him for half an hour with a large hunting knife in his hand; and I was also told that he said in the ladies' cabin that but for the presence of the officer and helmsman he would have ripped the Captain up."

Captain Baldwin also stated that all his passengers, except Randolph, expressed their desire, as soon as the *Alexander* should arrive at Liverpool, to sign a paper, declaring their entire satisfaction with his conduct throughout the affair.<sup>1</sup>

It should be remembered, too, that, even when Randolph was not actually demented, his mind was often acidulated by the bitter despondency which frequently precedes or follows dementia. It was at remote and isolated Roanoke, where there was little to divert his attention from his physical and mental suffering, where the dense primeval woods shut in the two rude habitations in which he lived like prison walls, where the foxes, hares, squirrels, and hermit thrushes came up fearlessly to his very windows, and the click of a fly-catcher's mandibles, closing down on an insect in midair, could be heard on a quiet summer afternoon many feet away, that he was most frequently a prey to the deepest dejection and the darkest misanthropy. In the whole range of prose literature, it would be difficult to find anyone who has ever played upon the single string of human misery with so many variations as he does in his letters. In that field of performance, with his acute sensibility, his fertile fancy, and his vivid imagination he is a *Paganini* unapproached and unapproachable.

Poor Roanoke! seated in a rolling and picturesque country, on one of the hills overlooking the Staunton

<sup>1</sup> *Niles Reg.*, v. 7 (3rd Series,) pp. 19-20.



River, which Randolph called the Brown Mountains,<sup>1</sup> in contrast with the Blue Ridge of his Piedmontese friend, Francis W. Gilmer, and maintained by an extensive and fertile estate, it might with a woman's touch, the voices of children, and the blessings of health have been a happy home, even though the nearest post-office to it—Charlotte Court House—was 12 or 13 miles away, and Richmond a three days' journey. Replying to a letter, in which Randolph had given him a description of his log-cabin and the forest around it, Francis Scott Key, weary with the drudgery and the chicane of the bar, said:

"I could not help smiling at the painting you have given me of Roanoke—*laudat diversa sequentes*. To me it seemed just such a shelter as I should wish to creep under,

"A boundless contiguity of shade,  
Where rumor of oppression and deceit  
Might never reach me more.""<sup>2</sup>

But these were not the feelings of a man who was such a sufferer that, for a large part of his life, it was impossible for him to be at peace anywhere. On Dec. 21, 1819, Randolph wrote to Theodore Dudley from Washington:

"I would be glad to hear something of my affairs at home; although I left it without a desire ever to see it again. For the first time in my life, a vague idea of quitting it forever floated through my mind—one that my engagements will probably forbid me to execute. I would not leave it dishonorably."<sup>3</sup>

Some 16 months later, Randolph wrote to the same correspondent:

"You speak of my leaving this place as if it were in my power to do it at will. Unless I could find a purchaser for it, I must

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Francis W. Gilmer, Roanoke, July 2, 1825, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 208.



remain a prisoner here, probably for the brief remainder of my life. Although entirely unable to attend to my affairs, I have twice mounted my horse and rode down to Col. C's [Carrington's] and staid all night, being unable to endure the want of society any longer. . . . If I did not fear tiring out the welcome of my friends, I would go to Amelia for a week or ten days; (a) and yet the return would be but so much the more bitter. Use reconciles me to it a little; but the first few days after I get home are almost intolerable."<sup>1</sup>

In an earlier letter, he had said to Theodore Dudley: "You know the savage solitude in which I live; into which I have been *driven to seek shelter*."<sup>2</sup> About the same time he referred to Roanoke, in a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, as his "lonely and savage" habitation; adding that he led a life of seclusion there unchequered by a single ray of enjoyment.<sup>3</sup>

Repeatedly in his letters to different correspondents, he compares himself at Roanoke with Robinson Crusoe on his desert island. In a letter to his niece, he spoke of himself as a "wild man of the woods"<sup>4</sup>; (b) and in another he said: "Here then I must live, and here I must die, 'a lone and banished man.'"<sup>5</sup> In still another letter to the same friend, he declared that he remained at Roanoke and looked at the trees until he almost conceited himself a dryad.<sup>6</sup> "I vegetate like the trees around me," was another expression of his in writing to Dr. Brockenbrough. Even the cool, green crown of these trees, so grateful in a warm climate, cast only a heavy oppressive shadow over his spirits; yet, when he returned on one occasion from Washington to Roanoke, and found that one of his overseers had cut down a tree, near one of the two houses in which he dwelt, he is said to have asked him sharply why he cut it down; and, when told because it was in the way

<sup>1</sup> June 24, 1821, *Id.*, 222.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 2, 130.

<sup>2</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 5, 1813, *Id.*, 133.

<sup>4</sup> Bryan MSS.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*, v. 2, 110.

of the house, to have exclaimed impatiently: "Why did you not remove the house?"

"You do not over rate the solitariness of the life I lead here," he wrote to Theodore Dudley. "It is dreary beyond conception except by the actual sufferer. I can only acquiesce in it as the lot in which I have been cast by the good providence of God and endeavor to bear it and the daily increasing infirmities which threaten total helplessness as well as I may. 'Many long weeks have passed since you heard from me.' And why should I write? To say that I had made another notch in my tally? Or to enter upon the monotonous list of grievances mentally and bodily, which egotism itself could scarcely bear to relate, and none other to listen to. You say truly, 'There is no substitute' for what you name 'that can fill the heart.' The bitter conviction has long ago rushed upon my own and arrested its function; not that it is without its paroxysms which I thank Heaven itself alone is conscious of. Perhaps, I am wrong to indulge in this vein; but I must write thus or not at all. No punishment except remorse can exceed the misery I feel. My heart swells to bursting at past recollections; and, as the present is without enjoyment, so is the future without hope; so far at least as respects this world."<sup>1</sup>

We should grow sick of Randolph's incessant repinings and moans at Roanoke if he did not make wretchedness such a musical thing; but how can we get out of patience with a man who could run his hands over the whole keyboard of his own unhappiness, from lassitude to loneliness, from loneliness to misery, and from misery to Stygian despair, and yet give as melodious an accent to every sigh or groan as if he were but an academic votary of the tune-ful Nine singing unreal sorrows?

"My best respects to Mrs. B.," he wrote to Dr. Brockenborough from Roanoke in the summer of 1819. "These glaring long days make me think of her. I lie in bed as long as I

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Jan. 10, 1821, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 219.

can to shorten them and keep my room darkened. Perhaps a straight waistcoat would not be amiss. . . . Farewell. If we ever meet again it must be here. Should I ever get in reach of a ship bound to any foreign land, I will endeavor to lose sight of this forever."<sup>1</sup>

Occasionally, from the mere vacancy of his existence he would go to bed by seven o'clock in the evening. And when did the *tædium vitæ* ever dye a letter more deeply than it does this one to Elizabeth T. Coalter:

"Roanoke, Oct. 10, 1828.

"MY DEAR CHILD,

"I write not only because you request it, but because it seems to fill up a half hour in my tedious day. No life can be more cheerless than mine. Shall I give you a specimen? One day serves for all. At daybreak, I take a large tumbler of milk warm from the cow, after which, but not before, I get a refreshing nap. I rise as late as possible on system and walk before breakfast about half a mile. After breakfast, I ride over the same beaten track and return 'too weary for my dinner,' which I eat without appetite, to pass away the time. Before dark, I go to bed, after having drunk the best part of a bottle of Madeira, or the whole of a bottle of Hermitage. Wine is my chief support. There is no variety in my life; even my morning's walk is over the same ground; weariness and lassitude are my portion. I feel deserted by the whole world, and a more dreary and desolate existence than mine was never known by man. Even our incomparably fine weather has no effect upon my spirits."<sup>2</sup>

As he advanced in life, he fell away from all the pastimes at Roanoke, one by one, which had given him the most pleasure at Bizarre and Roanoke.

"I have had a visit from a Struldbug—old Mr. Archibald B.," he wrote to Dr. Brockenborough in 1827. "It almost made me resolve never to leave my own plantation again. . . .

<sup>1</sup> *Circa* Aug. 22, 1819, Garland, v. 2, 111.

<sup>2</sup> Bryan MSS.

I have been obliged to give up riding on horseback altogether. It crucified me, and I did not get over a ride of two miles in the course of the whole day. I will stay at home and take your prescription."<sup>1</sup>

He was not to give up riding entirely yet by any means; but his zest for it was passing. What, however, was there to take him out riding, when even on another fine day in October in the benignant climate of Roanoke he could bring back no reflections more cheerful than these? After observing in a letter to his niece that, when a boy, he was a huge admirer of the poet Thomson, but that, as his taste had become more chastened, he had revolted at his "turgid pomposity," he said:

"Neither am I a painter nor a poet; and Heaven knows I am not now romantic. Yet, like you, I am an enthusiastic devotee of nature, and this is my favorite season. If anything could have aroused me from my lassitude, it would have been the heavenly weather of the last, my favorite, month [October]. My sole gratification has consisted in admiring the forest scenery in my solitary rides; indeed, it is nowhere seen in higher perfection than from my own door. There is a pleasure in the pathless woods. . . . The trees are half leafless, and, as they shed their remaining honors, they forcibly remind me of my own approaching destiny."<sup>2</sup>

Long before this, he had complained in a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough that he had lost his relish for reading. This last letter is a kind of *pot pourri* made up of all the sensations felt by a "soul out of taste" with the world, to use a term borrowed by Randolph from the sick when speaking of their mouths after a fever.

"I am here completely *hors du monde*," he said. "My neighbor —, with whom I have made a violent effort to establish an intercourse, has been here *twice by invitation*:

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, June 12, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 292.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Nov. 1, 1828, Bryan MSS.

W. Leigh as often on his way to court; and, on Saturday, I was agreeably surprised by stumbling on Frank Gilmer, who was wandering to and fro in the woods seeking my cabin. He left on Tuesday for his brother's in Henry. Except my standing dish, you have my whole society for *nine weeks*. On the terms by which I hold it, life is a curse from which I would willingly escape *if I knew where to fly*. I have lost my relish for reading; indeed, I could not devour even the *Corsair* with the zest that Lord Byron's pen generally inspires. It is very inferior to the *Giaour* or the *Bride*. The character of Conrad is unnatural. Blessed with his mistress, he had no motive for desperation."<sup>1</sup>

In later letters, he speaks again of his distaste for reading and his plantation affairs. "Even Shakespeare and Milton have lost their empire over me," he wrote to Elizabeth T. Coalter in 1822, and then he quotes: "Still drops some joy from withering life away."<sup>2</sup> On March 31, 1825, he wrote to Francis W. Gilmer that, though after a journey more toilsome and perilous than a voyage across the Atlantic, he had reached "his dreary and desolate habitation on March 22, he had not yet had strength and courage enough to visit any of his plantations."<sup>3</sup> On another occasion, he mentions the fact that he had not visited his Bushy Forest estate on the Little Roanoke, which was only about ten or twelve miles from Roanoke, for some two and a half years. He also lost heart for the shooting, to which he had once been so eagerly addicted. "My good friend," he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough in 1828, "I am sick, body and mind. I am without a single resource except the workings of my own fancy. Fine as the weather is, and has been, all this month, I have not drawn a trigger."<sup>4</sup> In another letter to Elizabeth T. Coalter, he says:

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, July 15, 1814, Garland, v. 2, 42.

<sup>2</sup> Dec. 29, 1822, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Mar. 31, 1825, Bryan MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Oct. 28, 1828, Garland, v. 2, 311.



“The face of nature gives plain indication of the approach of autumn, my once favorite season; but it now comes over me in shudderings and misgivings. My useless gun hangs over the fireplace, my dogs in vain invite me to the field in language more expressive than words, and my horses, like their master, grow asthmatick from want of exercise.”<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes, as is true of other men when the world is not served up to them with just the condiments which they desire, he fancied that he despised it.

“I can no longer imagine any state of things under which I should not be wretched,” he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough in 1827. “I mean a possible state. I am unable to enter into the conceptions and views of those around me. They talk to me of grave matters, and I see children blowing bubbles.”<sup>2</sup>

This letter was written from Washington, but another, written by Randolph a few years earlier from Roanoke to the same friend, is in the same vein:

“I have long been indebted to you for your letter by Mr. Watkins,” he said, “which reminded me of those which I used to receive from you some years ago, when I was not so entirely unable as I am now to make a suitable return to my correspondents. I feel most seriously this incapacity and deplore it, but, for the life of me, I cannot rouse myself to take an interest in the affairs of this ‘trumpery world,’ as ‘the Antiquary’ calls it, and with a curious felicity of expression; for it is upon a larger scale what a strolling play-house is upon a smaller, all outside show and tinsel, and frippery, and wretchedness. There are to be sure a few, a very few, who are what they seem to be. But this ought to concern me personally as little as any one; for I have no intercourse with those around me. I often mount my horse and sit upon him ten or fifteen minutes, wishing to go somewhere but not knowing where to ride; for I would escape any where from the incubus that weighs me down, body

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Aug. 25, 1823, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Feb. 25, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 288.

and soul; but the fiend follows me '*ex croupa*.' You can have no conception of the intenseness of this wretchedness, which in its effect on my mind I can compare to nothing but that of a lump of ice on the pulse of the wrist, which I have tried when a boy. And why do I obtrude all this upon you? Because from the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh. I can be and am silent for days and weeks together, except on indifferent subjects; but, if I address myself to a friend, the misery that preys upon me will not be suppressed. The strongest considerations of duty are barely sufficient to prevent me from absconding to some distant country, where I might live and die unknown. There is a selfishness in our occupations and pursuits, after the first gloss of youth has worn off, that hardens us against our fellow-men. This I *now* know to be the necessary consequence of our nature, but it is not, therefore, the less revolting. I had hoped to divert the gloom that overhangs me by writing this letter at the instigation of old Quashee, but I struggle against it in vain. Is it not Dr. Johnson who says that to attempt 'to think it down is madness'?"<sup>1</sup>

In 1828, the fiend was still following Randolph *ex croupa*, for he wrote to Elizabeth T. Coalter from Roanoke in that year: "My excellent friend, Mr. William Leigh, who lay here last night, left me this morning. Even his presence seemed hardly to exercise any power over the foul fiend that annoys me."<sup>2</sup> And, occasionally, Randolph's language is that of the blackest dejection. "I shall be found dead here one of these days like a rat in a hole," he wrote to Elizabeth T. Coalter from Roanoke in 1823.<sup>3</sup> But, if Randolph was more unhappy, on the whole, when he was at Roanoke than when he was elsewhere, it was only because at Roanoke he had more time to brood over his unhappiness and to be dogged by blue devils. There are letters written by him from Richmond and Washington that are fully as sad and splenetic as any that he ever

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 111.

<sup>2</sup> Oct. 7, 1828, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Oct. 23, 1823, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

wrote from Roanoke. It was from Richmond and not Roanoke that he wrote to Key in 1814: "In short, I hope that there is not another creature in the world as unhappy as myself."<sup>1</sup> And it was from Washington, and not Roanoke, that he wrote to Elizabeth T. Coalter about Feb. 26, 1823: "Your letters constitute my almost only resource against the dark spirit that persecutes me."<sup>2</sup> It was from Washington, too, that he wrote to Theodore Dudley: "I am glad to hear that you spend your time so agreeably. Mine is spent in unintermitting misery."<sup>3</sup> The truth is that, despite the forbidding terms in which Randolph often spoke of the solitude and rudeness of his Roanoke home and the frequency with which he announced his intention of living abroad, he entertained decidedly mixed feelings about the place, even after his life had fallen into the sere and yellow leaf of an all too precocious old age. Writing from Washington on Dec. 21, 1819, he said: "Here I find myself *isolé* almost as entirely as at Roanoke, for the quiet of which (although I left it without a desire ever to see it again) I have sometimes panted; or rather to escape from the scenes around me."<sup>4</sup> Some six years later, he wrote to Elizabeth T. Coalter: "Your thoughts on home are beautiful and just. I, too, have my thoughts on the same subject; although not the same thoughts. Lonely, and (at times) irksome, as it is, I wish I could pass my winter at my home<sup>5</sup>;" and, two days later, he wrote to the same niece that the time was drawing near for his departure from home and that he would leave it with great reluctance.<sup>6</sup> But what could more strikingly illustrate the composite nature of his feelings about Roanoke than this remarkable entry in one of his journals, under the date of Feb. 21, 1819:

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 36.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 9, 1820, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 227.

<sup>4</sup> Garland, v. 2, 112.

<sup>5</sup> Roanoke, Nov. 20, 1825, Bryan MSS.

<sup>6</sup> Nov. 22, 1825, Bryan MSS.



"This day left my wretched and solitary home. Would it were never to return. Impious wish!"<sup>1</sup> If for no other reason, he was reconciled at times to Roanoke for the reasons that he gave to his niece in 1821:

"I am much obliged to you, my dear, for the kind interest you express in my comfort, but I have been so much accustomed to solitude as to have become seasoned to it and am gradually losing all relish for society, like the poor old man who, on his liberation from prison, requested to be carried back to his cell, where he had worn away the best years of his life."<sup>2</sup>

The character of the two dwellings occupied by Randolph at Roanoke, one inherited and the other built by him, was hardly calculated to endear that place to him as a home; but he was as scrupulously neat in his care of them as he was in the care of his person. "His modest dwellings," declared John Randolph Bryan, his godson, who was frequently under his roof at Roanoke, in a letter published in the *Richmond Dispatch* on May 20, 1878, "were more free from everything that could soil a house or yard than any other place I ever saw; no fowls of any kind were allowed on his premises; nor was a horse permitted to graze in his yard; flies shunned the place." Indeed, they might well have done so, for Randolph had such an intense aversion to them that we can almost imagine him, like the Emperor Domitian, giving himself up in his hours of relaxation to spitting them upon a bodkin. (a)

Randolph evidently had a good *ménage* at Roanoke, because on Oct. 9, 1829, when he was in attendance upon the sessions of the Virginia Convention of that year, his friend James Hamilton, of South Carolina, lauded Roanoke in these terms in a letter to Martin Van Buren:

<sup>1</sup> *Va. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, July 29, 1821, Bryan MSS.

"I write you from the residence of our eccentric and gifted friend, where, by the delegated hospitality of his faithful and kind domestics, we have been detained for two days. His whole establishment is so unique that it is worth going a hundred miles to see; so much simplicity combined with so much elegance, and with all the most cheering plenty spread everywhere. I found a mandatory letter from him for me at [the] court house insisting on my stopping to refresh myself, children and horses, and greatly have we been recruited by the comforts of his homestead."<sup>1</sup>

This letter certainly indicates that there was no lack of comfort and good cheer at Roanoke. In the Diary, there are references to fruit trees, butchered animals, and ice, which tend to show that Roanoke furnished all the cheap supplies, that, together with the domestic service peculiar to slavery, did so much to give the old Virginia plantation its reputation for abundant, if not super-abundant, hospitality. There are few references in Randolph's writings to his vegetable garden, but what he had to say in one of his letters, from which we have already quoted, about his asparagus, is enough to convince us that he had a good one; for asparagus is rarely found occupying a position of isolated excellence in a kitchen garden. (a) Dr. James Waddell Alexander says that Randolph never would allow a carpet to be on his floors at Roanoke<sup>2</sup>; but this was a mistake. At any rate, the Diary shows that he bought some carpets or rugs at Kidderminster itself on April 15, 1822, when he was in England. The Diary shows too that he had a considerable amount of fine silver, and Hugh Blair Grigsby expressed the opinion that his library was "the most respectable collection of pure literature made by any of our eminent statesmen in Virginia since the Revolution."<sup>3</sup> His books at Roanoke were what we might

<sup>1</sup> Oct. 9, 1829, *Van Buren Papers*, Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, v. 1, 270.

<sup>3</sup> *South. Lit. Mess.*, v. 20, 79.

expect of a man whose stores of knowledge were derived from the best books of all ages, and whose intellect had been so exquisitely educated by them that, even when he was insane in 1832, there was no fault to be found with the elegant diction which still flowed from his lips.<sup>1</sup> The only respects, in the opinion of Grigsby, who had Randolph's love of books himself, in which the Randolph library was deficient, was in its lack of scientific works.<sup>2</sup>

But, all the same, Roanoke must have been in many regards a bare and sombre place of residence for a man of Randolph's wealth and social accomplishments; retained by him only because the Roanoke estate, as he was in the habit of saying, had never belonged to anyone except the Red Indians and his ancestors<sup>3</sup>; and because the burden of the British debt, which he had inherited in early life, made it imperatively necessary for him to cultivate habits of economy so long that when, despite the deceit which lurked in the value of a slave plantation, he had become easier in his circumstances, he found himself more inclined to absorb the lands of his neighbors around Roanoke than to build himself a handsome residence. (a) In a letter to Theodore Dudley, he speaks of this home as their "little cabin."<sup>4</sup> On another occasion, he concludes a letter to Theodore by saying: "I write this by candle light in our solitary cabin with the back of the only pen in the house."<sup>5</sup> This was certainly a sad state of destitution for a man whose pen was hardly less prolific of words than his tongue.

Apparently, there was no such thing as a flower garden or a flower bed at Roanoke. The nearest approach to anything of the sort, so far as we are aware, is mentioned in a letter to Theodore Dudley, in which Randolph said:

<sup>1</sup> Testimony of Wm. Leigh in *Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor.*, Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>2</sup> *South. Lit. Mess.*, v. 20, 79.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Josiah Quincy, Richm., Mar. 22, 1814, *Life of Quincy*, 350.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 154.

<sup>5</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 179.

"Pray plant some Sweet Briar and Swamp Roses"<sup>1</sup>; anæmic flowers which grew wild almost anywhere in Charlotte County.

Describing Roanoke, with which he was thoroughly familiar, Wm. H. Elliott, a schoolmate of Tudor Randolph, says: "The house was so completely and closely environed by trees and underwood of original growth that it seemed to have been taken by the top and let down into the bosom of a dense virgin forest."<sup>2</sup> The fullest description of the place, so far as our knowledge goes, is one given by Captain Harrison Robinson, of Danville, Va., who did not visit the spot, however, until six years after the death of Randolph.

"In 1839, he says, being a student at Hampden-Sidney College, I visited, in company with several fellow-students, the residence of John Randolph, of Roanoke. His will being at that time the subject of litigation, his estate appeared to be in a condition of neglect. The grounds surrounding the dwelling were entirely destitute of ornament. The negro, John, who had been Mr. Randolph's body-servant and constant attendant for many years, received us and showed us the objects of interest connected with the place.

"There were two buildings, one a log house with two rooms, the floor raised but a foot or two above the ground, of a style and material the rudest, and such as belonged to the poorest class of white persons in the rural districts of Virginia. The single door opened into the sitting room, which communicated by an inner door with his bed room. The other building was a small framed house which stood about twenty yards off, with large, well-glazed windows, containing two rooms on the ground floor, raised a few feet above the ground, evidently built long after the log house, of better material and more civilized style of finish. John called this his master's 'Summer House'; the log house his 'Winter House.'

"Entering the log house, we found every article of furniture remaining exactly (John assured us) as it had been left by Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 18, 1817, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 192.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 78.

Randolph at the time of his departure for Philadelphia on his last journey.

"At this distance of time, many particulars which then interested me have escaped my recollection. The furniture, with the exception of a few articles, was very plain. I recollect his fowling pieces, pistols, etc., of exquisite manufacture; also his fair top boots of the best materials and finish. But that which I recollect with most distinctness, in regard to this sitting room, was a small, old fashioned mahogany stand, upon which laid (*sic*) a plain leather portfolio, a candlestick, and a half-consumed candle, and one or two books. John informed us that this stand and what was upon it remained as it was left by his master when he ceased reading and went to bed, the night before he started for Philadelphia. One of the books was open and laid upon the open pages, the back upwards, as if it had just been put down by the reader. It was a thin duodecimo volume, bound in discolored sheepskin. On examination, I was surprised to find this book was McNish on Drunkenness. I opened the portfolio and found writing paper, some blank and some manuscripts in Mr. Randolph's own handwriting. I recollect particularly a sheet of foolscap which had not been folded, with the caption, 'A List of My Principal Friends,' followed by a list of names, numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, &c., the numbers (if my memory be correct) running as high as 20. The list covered two or three pages. On the right hand side of the pages, opposite to each name, or to many of the names, were remarks indicating Mr. Randolph's estimate of the character of the persons named, or some special circumstance of his history or friendship. Among the first, if not the first, was the name of Thomas H. Benton. . . .

"In the bed room we found the furniture generally of the same simple description. The garments and personal apparel were in some instances costly and elegant. The room was ill-lighted and must have been badly ventilated from the small size of the windows, unless the cracks in the log walls aided in ventilation. On the wall above the bed, hung a portrait of Mr. Randolph (in oil). I have forgotten the name of the artist, but the painting was well done. I distinctly recollect the beardless, boyish appearance of the face. In the 'Summer House,' we

found a library of perhaps more than a thousand volumes, embracing many of the standard authors of pure 'English undefiled,' of choice editions and binding; also a number of fine engravings (without frames) and books and prints of art and science. I saw no musical instruments. There were many manuscript letters, notes and cards, invitations to dinners, &c., which had been received by Mr. Randolph—some of them from persons of the highest distinction both in England and America. Doubtless, many of the like kind had disappeared before our visit; for John made no objection, but rather encouraged us to take away some of the notes, invitations, cards, etc., as souvenirs of our visit."<sup>1</sup> (a)

Such was the home of John Randolph of Roanoke, the owner of 8207½ acres of productive land in Charlotte County, Va., assessed at \$153,419.12<sup>2</sup>; of 228 acres of land in Halifax County, Va.<sup>3</sup>; of three small lots in Farmville, Va.<sup>4</sup>; of 383 slaves of all ages,<sup>5</sup> and, in addition to other farm chattels, of a stud of blooded horses worth perhaps \$30,000.<sup>6</sup> Begrudging of cash balances as the plantation system may have been, another measure of the profound despondency, in which Randolph was so often enveloped, may be found in the fact that, though possessed of a total estate, which could hardly have fallen short in value of \$300,000 or \$400,000—a large fortune for his day—he constantly spoke of himself as reduced to a condition of impoverishment. (a)

In 1827, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough: "If property in this country gave its possessor the command of money, I would go abroad immediately; but I feel that I am fixed here for life."<sup>7</sup> On another occasion, during the same

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 262.

<sup>2</sup> List of J. R.'s Real Estate (1833), Charlotte C. H., Va.

<sup>3</sup> Bouldin, 206.

<sup>4</sup> D. B. 26, p. 215, Clk's Office, Prince Edward Co., Va.

<sup>5</sup> Registration List of Negroes emancipated by J. R., Charlotte C. H.

<sup>6</sup> *40 Yrs.' Familiar Letters*, by Dr. Alexander, v. 1, 270.

<sup>7</sup> May 15, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 291.

year, he wrote to the same friend: "There are other reasons why I should stay at home. I have no clothes and no money; in fact I never was in so abject a state of misery and poverty since I was born."<sup>1</sup> In 1828, he wrote to his sea-captain friend, West: "I am as poor as a rat."<sup>2</sup> And it must be admitted that his Congressional salary was the only item of income upon which he could rely with entire confidence. All his other means were locked up in land and slaves, and his returns from the one were subject to many contingencies, and slaves, except in his early life, when the first pressure of the British debt had to be met, he would not sell at any price; though they increased from year to year with a rapidity which spoke well for his good management and benevolence. Purchase slaves, however, he did whenever he needed more.

How his plantation fared under Jefferson's policy of wounding our own citizens as often as their enemies wounded them, we have already seen. In 1819, the failure of the firm of Tompkins & Murray, of Richmond, in whose hands he had a sum of money, caused him to write to Francis Scott Key: "By the late bankruptcies I am reduced from ease and independence to debt and straitened circumstances. I have endeavored, in vain, to sell a part of my property at a reduced price to meet my engagements."<sup>3</sup> And then, too, even when there was no embargo to throw his corn and tobacco back upon his hands, and no general financial depression like that of 1819, and no scorching drouth, he had always, as the Diary repeatedly shows, to reckon with the malevolent River Spirit which issued at times from the Staunton and wreaked its rage on Randolph's fair alluvial plains. In 1813, he wrote to Francis Scott Key: "We have been flooded. This river has not been so high since August,

<sup>1</sup> June 12, 1827, *Id.*, 293.

<sup>2</sup> Cartersville, Apr. 30, 1828, *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 71.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 2, 107.



1795. A vast deal of corn is destroyed; I fear I have lost 500 barrels and 80 odd stacks of oats."<sup>1</sup> On another occasion, we find him riding about up to his saddle skirts in a rising flood at his Ferry Quarter, produced by a downpour of rain which rendered the bridge over the Little Roanoke at Mossing Ford impassable, as many another downpour has done in the author's day.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the caprices of the Staunton River are a thing that can always be counted upon to keep human existence along its banks from sinking into a state of stagnation. A remorseless, copper-colored sky, arid brown fields, twisted corn blades, and sickly, spindling tobacco plants; the rumble of distant thunder, the heavens slowly knitting their black brows, the play of the forked lightning, the rush of the wind through the tree tops, the refreshing, reviving rain, more precious in moderation than any vintage of the wine cellar, and, on the other hand, the long steady rainfall, unheralded by the voice of thunder, or the glare of lightning, or the wings of the wind, which continues hour after hour until the hapless husbandman, listening to it, as it falls on his roof, like clods on a coffin, grows sick and faint with dismay; how familiar are these phenomena to every planter who knows what drouth and flood mean on a Staunton River estate like Roanoke! (*a*)

But the profits of planting, even when unaccompanied by the profits of slave breeding, were not so uncertain that Randolph, who began with 2796 acres of land, which he had derived immediately, or mediately, from the estate of his father,<sup>3</sup> could not end with three times as many.

Bodily and mental depression not only produced in Randolph disgust with Roanoke, but with his whole Southside Virginia environment as well. "This desert," he called it in a letter to Theodore Dudley.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 26, 1813, *Id.*, v. 2, 22.

<sup>2</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from H. B. Chermside, Clk., Charlotte C. H., to author, Nov. 11, 1918.

<sup>4</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 204.



"In a few years more," he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough, "those of us who are alive will have to move off to *Kaintuck* or the *Massissippi*, where corn can be had for 6 pence a bushel and pork for a penny a pound. I do not wonder at the rage for immigration. What do the bulk of the people get here that they cannot have for one-fifth of the labor in the western country? Surely that must be the Yahoo's paradise, where he can get dead drunk for the hundredth part of a dollar."<sup>1</sup>

In 1827, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough:

"You say that 'without something of the sort [cotton spinning] Richmond is done over.' My dear friend, she is 'done over'; and past recovery. She wears the *facies hippocratica*. That is not the worst—the country is also ruined—past redemption, body and soul—soil and mind. My friend, Mr. Barksdale, has resolved to sell out and leave Amelia. He is right, and would be so were he to give his establishment there away. If I live through the coming year, I too will break my fetters. He was almost my only resource. They have dried up one by one, and I am left in the desert alone."<sup>2</sup>

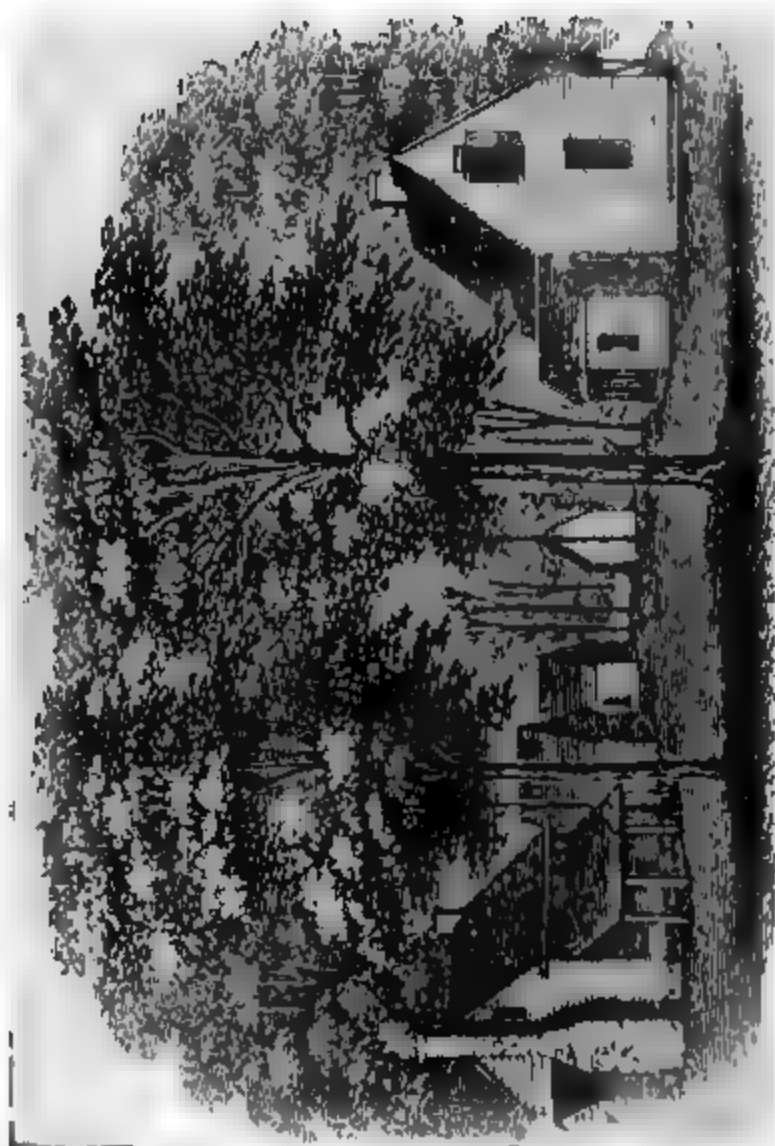
In a letter to Francis W. Gilmer, Randolph expressed the opinion that, except Ireland, Southside Virginia was the most neglected country in the world.<sup>3</sup> And, in another letter to Gilmer, he broke out into this gust of impatience with the same region:

"My friend it will not do to compare the soft flowing Afton and Guy's Cliff and Warwick Castle and Stoneleigh Abbey and Kenilworth with our rivers of mud and gullied plantations: *lucus a non lucendo*. For my part, I wish there was not another point of comparison, from which I wince more sorely. But, as Mrs. Honour says, 'comparisons are odious,' and we will drop them. The state of society in this country is intolerable; a more dreary, monotonous, joyless existence is not to be found than the life led by the richer part of our

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Nov. 26, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 2913.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Mar. 31, 1825, Bryan MSS.



**ROANOKE. THE BEAT OF JOHN RANDOLPH**  
Taken from Howe's Historical Collections of Virginia



population. I am persuaded that the slaves are happier, for they have some hours of recreation and merrymaking. Even music has no charms for their masters, and, for want of some sensation, whiskey and fanaticism are brought into play. The last music I heard was from the lips of Miss Stevens.

"I am glad to hear that Mr. K. is 'content with the country.' I think his delight from his little daughter must have reconciled him to it. In any view of it, it is incomprehensible to me. My friends, Mr. Leigh and H. Tucker, have pressed me to go over our mountains. The hope of meeting Dr. Brockenbrough and yourself in that dreary country could alone induce me to encounter its discomforts; to say nothing of those on the road. Travelling with us is a hard penance. In New Spain and South America, the traveller finds ample recompense for all his fatigues and privations in the grand and beautiful features of the country; but here——"<sup>1</sup>

What are we to think of a Virginian to whom even "the Valley" had become dreary? In justice to Randolph, however, we should add that this letter was written after "deluges of rain" had finally destroyed his tobacco crop, and that, in writing it, he called it a "splenetic effusion," a term which could be aptly applied to most of his strictures on Southside Virginia and Virginia at large, for the reader should realize that the cloud, which Randolph saw at this time, did not enfold simply Southside Virginia, but the whole of Virginia, if not the whole of the United States. Read this extract for illustration, from a letter written by him to his niece on July 27, 1825:

"I had omitted to notice the mention of my late friend, the late Col. Wm. Morton. He was one of the last of a race of men that cannot be found in times like these. Perhaps, you may think me a querulous old man, praising past manners and undervaluing the present. So is Tacitus who prefers the state of manners under the Commonwealth to that which prevailed under Tiberius and his successors.

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, July 26, 1825, Bryan MSS.

"The truth is that the paper and land-jobbing systems have produced an entire alteration in our character. A greediness to get office, and, having gained, to try with how small a portion of industry and ability in the discharge of its duties we may hold the place; a shameful exercise of the patronage, thus derived, in favour of our own connexions—these and other blotches deform the fair face of our society. From being a lively, hospitable people, fond of music and dancing, we are sunk into gloom and fanaticisms, and the solitary joys of intoxication are the chief solace of multitudes.

"The young men lounge and squirt tobacco juice and drink whiskey grog. The young women are too 'serious' to dance and almost to sing. So that we are sunk down into a state of joyless and almost monotonous existence that ought to satisfy no one above a Hottentot. He who has mind or soul must be revolted at such a state of things. Intellectual enjoyments there are none. Rational piety has given place to puritanical jargon; Atterbury and Tillotson and Barrow and Sherlock and South, [to] N. England sermons and trumpery 'tracts': meanwhile, the practice of Christianity, of moderation, kindness, charity, has been in the inverse ratio of its high-strained Calvinistic theory. Mammon is the true idol of our worship. The heart is with him. I see self-righteous people, who grind the faces of the poor, drive their slaves to the top of their speed, take the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and then abuse their neighbors for worldly-mindedness and want of religion, as if it were a piece of goods. They talk of getting religion as one would of getting a coat or hat. These people never think of those who cry 'Lord, Lord,' or of the people that 'draweth nigh unto me with their mouth but their heart is far from me.' By this time you are tired of my sermon; but mark I make no application."<sup>1</sup>

On Christmas Day, in 1828, he takes up the same refrain in another letter to his niece:

"MY DEAR CHILD: I am glad to learn that you are cheerful and happy. This used to be the season of gladness and joy.

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, July 27, 1825, Bryan MSS.

But times are changed now. I am well aware that I have changed not less, and that no degree of merriment and festivity would excite in me the same hilarity that I used to feel. But, laying that consideration aside, or rather, after making the most ample allowance for it, I cannot be deceived in the fact that we are an altered people, and altered in my estimation sadly for the worse. The very slaves have become almost forgetful of their *Saturnalia*. Where now are the rousing 'Christmas Fires' and merry, kind-hearted greetings of the by-gone times? On this day, it used to be my pride to present my mother with not less than a dozen partridges for an ample pie. The young people [became] merry and the old cheerful.

"The principal cause in this change in our manners is a gloomy spirit of Fanaticism, which, under the name, I will not say mask, of religion, has overspread our land. The rational and manly piety of our fathers is scoffed at as hardly better than downright infidelity, and God is first to be invested with the attributes of the evil principle before he can be worshipped. Morality is decried as something superfluous, if not dangerous, to salvation, and men of the vilest moral conduct are among the pillars of the Church; many of them in the pulpit. Our people, weighed down by their public and private burdens, the fruits of iniquitous legislation and their own improvidence, like all other nations under oppression, seek in austerities of opinion or practice to propitiate Heaven. This it is that has peopled the deserts of upper Egypt with solitary ascetics; that impels the car of Juggernaut, and fills our temples of Belial and Mammon. Our women, such is the invariable law of this disease, all of them, to the neglect of their domestic duties, and many to the injury of their reputations, are running mad after popular preachers or forming themselves into clubs of one sort or another that only serve to gratify the love of selfishness and notoriety. You judge rightly of the inestimable value of temper. It is worth all the rest put together. A sour face may cover a good heart, but its unhappy possessor will never confer what he does not possess.

"I need not say that my letters are for no eye but your own. I have made too many enemies and am more than sufficiently

hated already. But the animosity of a detected hypocrite, or of a dupe, whose eyes you can't open, is beyond measure."<sup>1</sup>

In 1829, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough in these sweeping terms:

"As to State politics, I do not wish to speak about them; the country is ruined past redemption. It is ruined in the spirit and character of the people. The standard of merit and morals has been lowered far below 'proof.' There is an abjectness of spirit that appals and disgusts me. Where now could we find leaders of a Revolution? The whole South will precipitate itself upon Louisiana and the adjoining deserts. Hares will huddle in the Capitol. '*Sauve qui peut*' is my maxim. Congress will liberate our slaves in less than 20 years. Adieu."<sup>2</sup>

More pessimistic still is a letter written by Randolph to Dr. Brockenbrough a few weeks later; in which he quotes a striking passage from one of Macaulay's *Essays*:

"My good friend: I scratched a few lines to you on Thursday (I think) or Friday, while lying in my bed. I am now out of it, and somewhat better; but I still feel the barb rankling in my side. Whether, or not, it be owing to the debility brought on by disease, I can't contemplate the present and future condition of my country without dismay and utter hopelessness. I trust that I am not one of those who (as was said of a certain great man) are always of the opinion of the book last read. But I met with a passage in a review (Edinburgh) of the works and life of Machiavelli that strikes me with great force as applicable to the whole country south of Patapsco: 'It is difficult to conceive any situation more painful than that of a great man condemned to watch the lingering agony of an exhausted country, to tend it during the alternate fits of stupefaction and raving which precede its dissolution, to see

<sup>1</sup> Christmas Day, 1825, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 12, 1829, Garland, v. 2, 317.

the signs of its vitality disappear one by one, till nothing is left but coldness, darkness, and corruption.'"<sup>1</sup>

Not infrequently, when Randolph was at Roanoke, his melancholy assumed the form of an intense craving for human society. In 1821, he wrote to Francis W. Gilmer:

"I yearn to see and speak to somebody who is not indifferent or distrustful of me, and there are moments, when the arrival of anyone for whom I feel regard, would give me as much pleasure as the drawing of the great prize in the Lottery can have afforded your brother of the robe. . . . I sometimes look towards my gate, not as Sir Arthur Mandour, who looked out upon his long, straight avenues, for there is no feeling of *ennui* in my case, but with a sense of privation of human intercourse and a gushing of the heart towards the individual whom I picture to myself as riding or driving up. If I were a poet in fact as well as in temperament, I would embody in verse 'feelings that lie too deep for tears.' As I am not, I must refer you to the Lake School whose productions I never have read and probably never shall."<sup>2</sup>

To his niece the desire for congenial companionship was expressed with still greater intensity: "At this moment," he wrote to her in 1823, "I would rather see the face of a friend than fill a throne; but I am so unused to the voice of kindness that it would unman me."<sup>3</sup> But it was true friends that he wished to see; not mere curious strangers, nor mere *nati fruges [aut tempus] consumere*. In 1828, he wrote to his niece:

"Had you and your brother been alone, I should certainly have seen you and spent one day at least with you. But Mrs. C. is quite a stranger to me. I can hardly bear the gaze of the multitude, but I shrink from the eyes of those who know me only by person or reputation. It may be an improper feeling,

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Feb. 9, 1829, Garland, v. 2, 317.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Jul. 22, 1821, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Sep. 26, 1823, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.



but it is a deeply-seated one. Duty to the kindest of constituents alone could drive me from home. It is a heavy penance, but light in comparison with carrying my wretched ailments into a private house. . . . Again there are times when silence and abstraction are as necessary to me as sleep; and yet I can stop nowhere but at a country inn without being annoyed by people who seem to think it impossible that a traveller can be weary, or that he requires rest and refreshment."<sup>1</sup>

This letter was written from Washington, but it might as well have been written from Roanoke. In another letter to his niece, from which we have already quoted, he said: "The people whom I see are made of wood and wire, and talk like the cuckoos in a Dutch clock, mechanically; and even such as these I hardly see once a month."<sup>2</sup> It was this kind of people who had caused him to say to his niece in still another letter, written at Roanoke on a dark rainy day: "I bless God that I have a tight roof over my head, and, if no company, no bore."<sup>3</sup>

Nowhere in his correspondence is the distinction which he maintained between visits from his friends and agreeable neighbors and visitations from other persons more clearly manifested than in one of his letters to his niece:

"I have made up my own scheme of life for the few sands that remain in the glass," he said. "Here I can have at absolute command all I want, that is attainable; accommodations for my infirmities that I should be unreasonable to look for abroad, except in an English Inn. Not a soul visits me; neither do I desire the society of such as are unable to instruct or amuse me by their conversation, or delight me by their manners; and where are these to be found? . . . Therefore, I go nowhere, and give it distinctly to be understood that I receive none but friends. Of these Mr. Leigh is 20 miles off, bad road, with a ferry and dangerous ford; Mr. Barksdale

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Nov. 28, 1828, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Sept. 26, 1823, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Nov. 1, 1828, Bryan MSS.

70, and Dr. B, 100. So far from being oppressed by solitude, altho' I acknowledge that I should like a neighbor to whose house I could ride and take an unceremonious dinner, or who would partake of my family fare and afternoon pipe and bottle, . . . I feel a little alarm when the click of the gate announces the approach of a stranger. The morning ride, my affairs, my horses and dogs afford me ample occupation, and over my coffee and wine I look with pity upon this trumpery world, where my actions are watched and words set down to be repeated, not always as they are uttered. To this I except the presence of the very few whose company is not irksome to me."<sup>1</sup>

Occasionally, of course, when profoundly *à la mort* Randolph discharged his bile, as we all are likely to do, under the same circumstances, in reproaches or even self-reproach. In 1828, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough: "For the last month, I have been sensible of a dejection of mind that I can't shake off. Perhaps some interchange of the courtesies and civilities of life might alleviate it; but these are unknown in this region."<sup>2</sup> Less than a month later, he wrote again to Dr. Brockenbrough, saying: "Sometimes, in a fit of sullen indignation, I almost resolve to abjure all intercourse with mankind; but the yearning of my heart after those whom I have loved, but who, in the eagerness of their own pursuits, seem to have cast me aside, tell me better."<sup>3</sup> Once, in a letter, he fell into poetic quotation, as it was easy for him, with a memory that held everything in its grasp like a spring-lock, to do, and compared himself with Darius:

"Deserted at his utmost need  
By those his former bounty fed."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Aug. 18, 1828, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 30, 1828, Garland, v. 2, 311.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Oct. 28, 1828, Garland, v. 2, 311.

<sup>4</sup> Dec. 6, 1831, Bouldin, 228.

More painful still, because our self-chastisements are much more likely to be merited than our chastisements of others, was the impulse which caused him to declare that he knew how to win neither love nor esteem.

To ignore, when reviewing Randolph's intemperance of speech and conduct, such physical pain and debility, and such mental aberrations as those upon which we have dwelt, would, obviously, be to violate the simplest principles of common justice. Few men, no matter how happy-tempered originally, could be so continuously harassed as he was, body and mind, without a severe loss of good nature and self-restraint. Moreover, as we shall presently see, Randolph's temper was not only jaundiced by disease, but soured by domestic misfortunes.

It has also been thought that Randolph's excesses of temper were due in no little measure to drink; but we have positive testimony to the effect that drink usually made him rather good-natured than otherwise. "My opinion," Judge Leigh testified in the Randolph will litigation, "is that the effect which intoxication produced on him was to impair his articulation and to render him more good-humored."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, we are convinced that Randolph by no means drank as deeply at any period of his life as has been supposed; and that the injustice, that has been done him in this respect, is referable mainly to failure to properly discriminate between the man, as he was after his return from Russia, an utter wreck physically and mentally, and as he was in the earlier stages of his existence. That he consumed large quantities of spirits and wine after his return from Russia, there can be no doubt. On that point, the testimony of Wyatt Cardwell, John Marshall, Judge Leigh, and Joseph M. Daniel, in the Randolph will litigation, is conclusive; but even Judge Leigh testified in that litigation in regard to this period:

<sup>1</sup> *Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor.*, Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

“I do not remember that I saw him drinking to excess previous to the first week in March, 1832.” For a long time after his return from Russia, Randolph did not have mind enough to curb any urgent physical propensity, and, even if his intellect had not been overthrown, he might well have craved liquor as he craved opium; simply as an anodyne with which to lull his unbearable misery to sleep.

Until his return from Russia, he drank very little spirits of any sort. The only evidence to the contrary, so far as we know, is that furnished us by James W. Bouldin, who was a resident of Charlotte County. This is what he says:

“From the first time I ever saw Mr. Randolph to the last—say from about 1808 or '9 till his death—he drank very hard—great quantities of all kinds of intoxicating drink. He generally drank the best, whether wine or distilled spirits; but he would drink bad if he could not get good.

“This had various and very singular effects on him. Sometimes he became drunk in the ordinary way—lost the use of his limbs, including his tongue, and his mental faculties became almost entirely obscured. This, however, I presume was seldom, as I do not recollect of having seen it happen more than two or three times in all my acquaintance with him. Generally, the more he drank, the stronger and the more brilliant he became, until, after weeks, sometimes he would become suddenly prostrate and sink, and so, after a time, he would recover.

“Although he drank much in public, he drank still more in private, and, although this fact was known to so many, yet it is a matter of great surprise to nine-tenths of persons to be told that he drank to excess. He scarcely ever drank with the illiterate or vulgar at all, even during the highest electioneering times. I scarcely ever saw him drinking with gentlemen, but he drank more than any of them. Still he had the power of fascination and charm to such an extent on most men that, though he drank much, they thought it had no effect upon him. One of the most talented men I ever knew, General J., told me he knew that when he boarded with Mr. Randolph, at Craw-

ford's, he drank more brandy (fifth proof French brandy) than any man he ever saw."<sup>1</sup>

This sounds very specific, but we are told by John Randolph Bryan that James Bouldin's acquaintance with Randolph was so limited that he was never in Randolph's home as an invited guest. In this he was in part mistaken, for, in his *Recollections*, Bouldin states that he once slept in the same room at Roanoke with Randolph<sup>2</sup>; nor are references to Bouldin in Randolph's Diary and other journals lacking. But it is an unquestionable fact that Bouldin was not on the same intimate footing with Randolph as either William Leigh or Dr. Brockenbrough, if on anything approaching an intimate footing with him at all. This being so, we find it difficult to accept his statements in regard to Randolph's habits to their full extent in the face of what Judge Leigh, who was for years on the very closest terms with Randolph at Roanoke, at his own home, and at the homes of common friends of theirs, with whom they frequently dined together, has to say upon the same subject under oath in the Randolph will litigation.

"I do not remember," he testified in this litigation, "to have seen Mr. Randolph under strong excitement from drinking spirituous liquors for any considerable period previous to 1831-2 but at one period—namely, the year 1820, the summer after Commodore Decaur's death; and I have already stated in the body of my deposition that I then thought him deranged. . . . Mr. Randolph very rarely drank spirituous liquors. His drink was principally wine and porter. I do not now remember that I ever saw him intoxicated from drinking spirituous liquors before 1831, except in 1820, but on one occasion—at Halifax Court House in the year 1829. On that occasion, he exhibited no harsh demeanor or irritable feelings. On that occasion, he seemed to be more good-humored than he

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 105.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 11.

usually was. I have seen him at his own house in the evening intoxicated several times from drinking wine."

This, it should be borne in mind, was the testimony of a man who was not only for many years as familiar with Randolph as any one brother is with another, and enjoyed throughout life a singularly high reputation as a man of veracity and integrity, but who was accustomed as a judge to weigh his words most scrupulously. What he says, it is true, does not exculpate Randolph from the charge of excessive drinking at times, but it presents him to us as not drinking more immoderately than some of his political contemporaries did without suffering any considerable amount of discredit.

The same observations might be made with even more force upon the testimony of Dr. John Brockenbrough, who was one of Randolph's intimate friends from 1807 until the day of Randolph's death:

"In several instances," he said, "Mr. Randolph exhibited very *outré* and capricious conduct in his dress, manners and conversation; but, even on these occasions, he would converse with a friend or two in the most rational and interesting manner, and he seemed to understand perfectly what he had said or done. Such conduct as I have referred to always appeared to me to be much aggravated when he had taken wine, which he sometimes took to excess—not that he became drunk, but much stimulated and excited."

We do not forget what Dr. Lacy said about the amount of rum toddy that Randolph drank at Ararat; but Randolph drank rum toddy there, we imagine, because he had left all his Madeira behind him at Roanoke. Besides, in determining whether Randolph drank inordinate quantities of rum toddy at Ararat, we should want to apply some other standard to what he drank than that of a strict Presbyterian clergyman, such as Dr. Lacy was. More-

over, Dr. Lacy tells us that Randolph did not seem to be in the least befuddled from what he drank; and this certainly could not have been true of such a delicate and excitable man as Randolph was if his potations had been very deep. If there is anything certain about drink, it is that when taken in excess it makes one drunk.

Nor do we forget that Jacob Harvey tells us that on one occasion when the worthy Captain of the *Amity* insisted upon their drinking "sweetheart and wives" on a Saturday, in accordance with the rule, Randolph "became rather beside himself"; but he adds, "Not drunk, gentle reader, but noisy and somewhat oblivious."<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, as we have already intimated, one of Harvey's stories is sometimes as much the offspring of the imagination as of the memory.

Dr. I. B. Rice was also of the opinion "that much of the irregularity" of Randolph's conduct "proceeded from disease of body and inebriety."<sup>2</sup> For all that his context shows, however, this opinion may have been based upon Randolph's habits after his return from Russia.

Moreover, how comes it that James W. Bouldin could have stated that from the first time that he ever saw Randolph, which was about 1808, or 1809, until Randolph's death, he drank "great quantities of all kinds of intoxicating drinks," and yet be reported by Powhatan Bouldin as also saying that, during the War of 1812, Randolph drank but little and he thought only wine?<sup>3</sup>

Randolph himself has some confessions to make on the subject of drinking. In a letter written to Dr. Brockenbrough in 1826, he says: "Now, when too late, I am a confirmed toast and water man. My convivialities for 15 years (1807 to 1822) are now telling upon me"<sup>4</sup>; and, after entering in the Diary on different occasions dinners at which he had been present at Col. Morton's, Col.

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 314.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 114.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, 21.

<sup>4</sup> March 4, 1826, Garland, v. 2, 268.



Clark's, Isaac Coles', and James Bruce's, he adds in each case the word: "Debauch." Such confessions as these should not be taken too literally. Randolph had a very delicate constitution and a very emphatic tongue, and, as we have seen, he could not even drink a little Madeira with Kidder Randolph without declaring that he had given him a slice of his constitution. So far as we are cognizant, there is no evidence whatever that Col. Morton, Col. Clark, Isaac Coles, and James Bruce were not among the soberest and most conservative, as they were undoubtedly among the most conspicuous, citizens and landowners of Halifax and Charlotte Counties.

Then, too, if Randolph's testimony against himself is to be weighed, so should his testimony in his own behalf. In 1822, he wrote to Theodore Dudley:

"I had rather die than drink habitually brandy and water. Look around you and see its ravages. Thank God it does not possess any allurements for me! I have sometimes been the better for a little brandy toddy, but I have not tasted spirits for six weeks or more; and never shall again but as medicine. Genuine Madeira is the only thing except good water that I can drink with pleasure or impunity; not always with the last; sometimes with neither."<sup>1</sup>

Later, he wrote to Theodore Dudley:

"Yesterday (or 'on yesterday' as it is said here) I dined out, and, although I carried (or rather Johnny did) my bottles of toast and water and milk, I was tortured with indigestion. My night has been a most wretched one, and all my former symptoms seem aggravated. I will, however, persevere throughout this month at least; indeed I feel no great difficulty in abstaining—none at all from wine and all fermented and distilled liquors. The odor of a fine, fat canvas-back sometimes tries my self-denial. Every other strong drink but wine is now absolutely distasteful to me, and I have no great propensity to that."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 5, 1822, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 251.

<sup>2</sup> Feb. 22, 1822, *Id.*, 245.



## 374 John Randolph of Roanoke

Much was made by public gossip of Randolph's famous call when he was speaking: "Tims, more toast and water." But Mrs. Seaton, who knew Randolph well at Washington, declares that she never saw him affected by wine.<sup>1</sup> Nor could anything be more clear or more direct than the testimony of Thomas H. Benton, who lodged in a room next to that occupied by Randolph during the Congressional Session of 1821-22, and saw Randolph at all hours of the day and night:

"Love of wine," Benton said, "was attributed to him; and what was mental excitement was referred to deep potations. It was a great error. I never saw him affected by wine—not even to the slightest departure from the habitual and scrupulous decorum of his manners."<sup>2</sup>

Equally to the point is a letter from Mark Alexander, one of Randolph's colleagues and intimate friends, which was published in the *Richmond Enquirer* on Jan. 23, 1827. After denying that Randolph had used scurrilous language about one of his fellow-Congressmen, Alexander said: "My association with Mr. Randolph, under the same roof for many winters past, enables me farther to state that the charge of drunkenness is equally unfounded."

But there can be no doubt that Randolph drank Madeira freely throughout his life except at times when ill-health compelled him to renounce it altogether for a time, as in 1829.<sup>3</sup> "Peter," Randolph remarked on one occasion, when his cousin, Peter Randolph, was at his table at Roanoke, "You see I have not forgotten how to drink old Madeira." "It would be very strange," replied Peter Randolph, "if one so well versed in the practice should forget it."<sup>4</sup> Aside from the years of Randolph's life, which followed his return from Russia, and the few

<sup>1</sup> P. 474.

<sup>2</sup> *Thirty Years' View*, v. 1, 474.

<sup>3</sup> Apr. 21, 1829, Garland, v. 2, 322.

<sup>4</sup> Bouldin, 24.

occasions on which he became intoxicated before that time, we suspect that the real extent on the whole to which he used intoxicating beverages is pretty well summed up in the letter written by John Randolph Bryan to Robertson, to which we have already referred.

“The idea of his drinking intemperately,” this letter says, “has no foundation in fact. He drank wine habitually for the greater part of his life, but his health afterwards forbade him to touch it. When he offered us a glass, which he did sometimes, I have heard him say: ‘My son, never spur a willing horse,’ as a caution to us.”<sup>1</sup>

John Randolph Bryan is referring to the period of four years during which he and his brother Thomas, of whom we shall have a word to say hereafter, were under Randolph’s roof when they were not off at school.<sup>2</sup> In a letter to John Randolph Bryan, written from London after the latter had married his niece, Randolph adjured Bryan to have a good apple orchard, and to banish ardent spirits as a beverage from his table. “If at the beginning,” he said, “you are obliged to resort to spirits, let your wife make the punch or toddy by measure of a certain strength, never to be increased, according to the good old Virginia fashion.”<sup>3</sup> We can only trust that, when his niece read this letter, she did not recall the one which her uncle had written to her about two years before in which he had informed her that his practice was to go to bed before dark after having drunk the best part of a bottle of Madeira, or the whole of a bottle of Hermitage. In 1832, his habits in this respect were very much the same, because under date of Oct. 20, 1832, Dr. Ethelbert Algernon Coleman makes this entry in his Diary just after a visit to Roanoke: “He seems very weak, and says that he was worse from having omitted the usual opiate the night

<sup>1</sup> Bryan, MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 28, 1830, Bryan MSS.

before. At dinner, he had retired to his room but a cooler of wine and a wine-glass was carried there."

The truth is that, though Randolph occasionally renounced the use of wine entirely, or was for a time quite abstemious in its use, he always had a plenteous supply of Madeira on hand and consumed it profusely in accordance with the habits of his convivial day. In 1817, he writes to Dr. Dudley from "Babel": "I have bought a fine pipe of Madeira. Did Quashia [one of his wagoners] bring up the quarter cask?"<sup>1</sup> The Diary evidences the fact that he bought a hogshead of Madeira in 1803, and also that, on Oct. 27, 1812, he had 210 bottles, 2 carboys, and 3 case bottles of Madeira of different vintages. Opposite to another Madeira entry in the Diary, dated Sept. 5, 1808, is this dolorous observation: "Drank in the past year 10 dozen and 3 bottles. N. B. Very little at home." But this wine would seem to have been consumed in Washington, where he was frequently a host. We also know, through a letter from John Randolph Clay, to His Excellency, General Bibikoff, that a cask of Madeira which belonged to Randolph, was shipped to him at St. Petersburg from Copenhagen when he was minister to Russia.<sup>2</sup>

Randolph was fond of saying that we never learn from the experience of others, but his own success in making palatable cider was, perhaps, one of the things that led him to advise John Randolph Bryan to plant an apple orchard. At any rate, in one of his briefer journals, under date of March 20, 1830, he mentions the fact that he had drawn off 104 bottles of cider.

The revivifying effect of a little Madeira on Randolph, when he was sick and languid, was so great that his guests must have been quick to condone his resort to it, if it always produced the consequences described by Dr.

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 14, 1817, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 182.


<sup>2</sup> Nov. 13, 1830, *Clay Papers*, Libr. Cong.

Robert L. Dabney, the celebrated Presbyterian divine, in his *Reminiscences of John Randolph*.<sup>1</sup>

"Dr. Wm. Morton," Dr. Dabney says, "was the son of old Maj. James Morton, of Willington—'Old Solid Column'—whom Randolph greatly admired for his steady integrity. (a) This regard for the father, combined with a certain sympathy of classical tastes to make the young Doctor a favorite with Randolph. One day, he received a note from him, written in terms of exquisite courtesy and elegance, inviting him to visit Roanoke. The note stated that his adopted son, Dr. Dudley, and one of the young Bryans were there; that, as his own health was very bad, he feared the two young men were having but a dull time, and he wished Dr. Morton to come up and assist him in entertaining them. He accepted the invitation. He found Mr. Randolph an invalid from his old chronic diarrhoea, and occupying the small, two-roomed cottage. The young men slept and had their meals in the new library building. One morning, the black valet, John, came in as they were finishing their breakfast and said his master sent him to invite them, if they felt inclined, to join him in the little house in his family prayers. Of course, the young men went over. They found Mr. Randolph looking feeble and languid, sitting in his large padded arm-chair, wearing the dressing gown which he had on at his duel with Henry Clay, and still showing the two bullet holes made by Clay's bullet. He invited the young men to seats and said: 'I hope my domestics, young gentlemen, attend to all your wants and have given you a comfortable breakfast. I have taken the only breakfast my bad health allows me, my crackers and cup of black tea, and, as this is the time for our family prayers, I am glad that you join me in them.' He had at his elbow a little stand supporting the family Bible and prayer-book, and the domestics about the place had taken their places. Dr. Morton said that he read the Scriptures and prayers with all the propriety and solemnity which would have been shown by old Dr. Moses Hoge, or Dr. Alexander. The young men then made motions to leave the room, when Mr. Randolph said to

<sup>1</sup> *Union Seminary Magazine*, 1894-95, v. 6, 14-21.

them: 'My young friends, I know the society of a sick old man may not be very attractive, but, if you have time to sit awhile, you will really do me a favor, as I am not well enough to do any study.' They resumed their seats, of course, hoping to hear much of his brilliant and instructive conversation. But he seemed languid and disinclined to talk. The young men had to make conversation in which he took but small part. After a time, one of them mentioned a recent escapade of —— who then took occasional but terrible sprees. It was reported in one of these he had recently become so violent towards his wife that she felt constrained to flee from her own house at a dead hour of the night in her sleeping apparel, and take refuge in the overseer's house. Dr. Dudley commented on this with severity, remarking that Mrs. —— was a lady of high family, of exemplary virtues and piety, and a faithful wife and mother of his numerous children. Dudley said that the husband, who could maltreat his own wife under these circumstances, was a monster, and hanging was too good for him. Here Mr. Randolph checked him, and, with all the gravity of the most saintly pastor, addressed him about as follows: 'Oh, my young friend, do not be severe; remember the good rule, "Judge not, that ye be not judged."' Doubtless the Wise Being, who uttered this, had a far tenderer conscience than any of us, and a far keener disapprobation of all sin; yet he enjoined this as the rule of charity for us towards our fellow sinners. You think you see the grossness of ——'s fault, but probably you do not know his temptations nor the depth of his repentance.' This pious rebuke, of course, damped the conversation a little. After awhile, Mr. Randolph said in a weak and weary tone: 'My infirmities are so extreme that they constrain me to expedients which I greatly dislike. Without some stimulant, my weakness becomes a burden greater than I can bear. John, you will have to give me a glass of that old Madeira.' The servant took down a bottle of wine from a shelf, and a straw-stem wine glass, and placed them on the stand beside him. Mr. Randolph slowly sipped one glass, and, in a few minutes, it produced a change in him. A faint color came to his pallid cheeks, his wonderful eyes kindled, he sat more erect in his chair, his voice lost its languor, and he showed a disposition to



take interest in the conversation. The young men were only too glad to give him the lead. He became animated and fluent. One racy incident or witticism followed another, while he filled another glass of wine and drank it. This continued till he had taken about a half a dozen, and Dr. Morton felt sure that he was as unconscious of doing so as the habitual snuff-taker is of the number of pinches he inhales while his mind is absorbed. Mr. Randolph became first animated, then brilliant, and then bitter and profane. His talk returned to ——'s treatment of his wife, when, forgetting his own rebuke of Dr. Dudley, he denounced him as a monster who should be burned alive. Dr. Morton's explanation was that his digestive organs were so enfeebled by disease, and so sensitive that a small portion of wine, such as would have been entirely temperate for him when in health, produced at first a mental intoxication under which he at once lost his self-control and almost consciousness of his own actions."

Of the high temper of Randolph, even when not goaded by stimuli of any sort, there can be no doubt. "Like many other men of genius," Dr. Brockenbrough testified in the Randolph will litigation, "he was of the irritable in his temper, and in some cases his feelings seemed to be excited almost to frenzy." But we have a new and softening sense of the strange amalgam, which constituted Randolph's nature, when Dr. Brockenbrough adds: "But, even on these occasions, he soon became mild and gentle towards his friends and would hear any remonstrance from them against his intemperance; provided there was no third person present."<sup>1</sup> (a)

If anything derogatory to the reputation of Randolph has been held back by us, we do not know what it is; and now we assert, without hesitation, that sins of high, and to some extent bad, temper, and occasional intemperance aside, the character and conduct of Randolph, when he

<sup>1</sup> Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor., Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

was sane, were altogether admirable; and this, too, even in some respects in which he has been grossly maligned. All the royal organs of human character, to borrow a phrase from the old Anatomists, were in him highly developed. He was unflinchingly courageous; nicely truthful and punctiliously honorable. How richly, so far as public integrity goes, he is entitled to a share in the collective credit which led Lowell to term Virginia the "mother of States and unpolluted men," we have already seen; and it is hardly necessary to say anything more about his courage. It belonged to him as naturally as a red comb, a lively plumage, a pair of sharp spurs, and a death-defying spirit belong to a game-cock. One day in his early life, when someone on the streets of Petersburg told him that a desperado near its market had committed some outrage, and was refusing to surrender to an officer of the law, he sought the man out at once and, fixing his eye upon him, walked fearlessly up to him, laid his hand upon him, and called out: "Constable, do your duty!"<sup>1</sup>

John Randolph Bryan tells us that Randolph's advice to him as a schoolboy was that, if he could really forgive anyone for Christ's sake, always to do so; but never to mistake the love of God for the fear of man.<sup>2</sup> In one of his letters to his niece, he said: "No, my dearest child, I fear God too much to fear man at all."<sup>3</sup> If this was not a veracious vaunt, it was only because few vaunts are entirely veracious. On one occasion, he goes to Hampden-Sidney College to hear Dr. Hoge, and then, the same day, swims the swollen Appomattox River on horseback, as if the latter thing was as ordinary an occurrence as the former.<sup>4</sup> Frail as he was, he would not have hesitated, we think, to have backed Bucephalus. Any suggestion of assistance, when he was handling a restive horse, was met by him with disdainful impatience. When he was

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 167.

<sup>2</sup> Mar. 30, 1828, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> J. C. Grinnan MSS.

<sup>4</sup> J. R.'s Diary.



almost in the last stages of physical decay, a man offered to lead his horse over a stream at a difficult crossing. "No man takes hold of my steed when I am on him," was Randolph's sharp reply.<sup>1</sup> (a) On another occasion, about the same time, a horse, on which he was riding, took fright at a bush. Randolph stuck his spurs deeply into the animal's sides, and he plunged and reared so madly that one of Randolph's overseers became alarmed for his employer's safety, and so expressed himself. "It is as easy to throw a new girth from a saddle as to throw me," was Randolph's proud exclamation; and he did not cease to ply his spurs until he had made the horse go up to the bush.<sup>2</sup> Such a man as this was certainly speaking with studied moderation when, after one of the Randolphs had tweaked Andrew Jackson's nose at Fredericksburg—a dangerous feat, not unlike that of taking the breeks off a Hielander—he declared in his last speech at Charlotte Court House: "I never could suffer to be imposed upon; I cannot permit a man to pull my nose or kick my backside. I am very far from being clear of the same faults that Jackson has."<sup>3</sup>

Speaking of Randolph at the time of his duel with Clay, when Tatnall was loading his pistols for him, just before the exchange of shots took place, General James Hamilton says: "I took his hand; there was not in its touch the quivering of one pulsation."<sup>4</sup> (b) It is to be regretted that a man of such well-established reputation for intrepidity should not have consistently frowned upon duelling, so far as it was possible for a public man to do so in Randolph's day. Benton tells us that, at one time, doubtless during the period of his religious enthusiasm, Randolph declared that he would neither give nor receive a challenge; but afterwards, Benton says, he hit upon a train of reasoning, founded upon analogies derived from public

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 33.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 102.

<sup>3</sup> Bouldin, 187.

<sup>4</sup> Garland, v. 2, 259.



warfare,<sup>1</sup> which brought him back to the conviction which he harbored when he made this entry in his Diary: "Duelling: A man may shoot him who invades his character as he may shoot him who breaks into his house. Johnson, Boswell's *Life*." The view which this entry indicates was still held by Randolph, when the Virginia Convention of 1829-30 was in session; for, in that body, he strenuously opposed a proposition which sought to inflict disqualification for public office upon any person fighting or abetting a duel; declaring, among other things, that he had no hesitation in saying that place a man's honor in one scale, and all the offices in the gift of King or Kaiser in the other, a man of honor would spurn them all in comparison with his violated feelings and his violated reputation.<sup>2</sup> But Randolph, in this connection, at least deserves the credit of having endeavored to lift the duel above the level of ordinary affrays, fought without any regard to decorum or fairness, and to relieve the challenged party of the obligation to fight any challenger, whether he had any honor to be wounded, or standing to be lost, or not. The principles, by which the conduct of Randolph, in relation to the duel, was regulated, are presented in a pointed manner in one of his letters to Nicholson:

"Your account of Mr. Wright's death is truly melancholy. For my part, I always thought of Duelling that [it] is to be tolerated as a necessary evil (by no means encouraged), and my opinion on that head remains unchanged. The manners of the people of our country have certainly undergone a great change for the worse even within my remembrance. The character of the country is disgraced by a brutality which breaks forth very often in the conduct of a duel as well as in the circumstances which lead to it, but which the fear of such an appeal does, in some degree, contribute to repress. Assassinations have become not uncommon in this State since the act to suppress duelling. Yet, dreadful as the state of

<sup>1</sup> 30 Yrs.' *View*, 475.

<sup>2</sup> *Debates*, 782.

society is with us, I would not exchange it for the puritanical manners of N. England. In ordinary cases, I think that man more to be pitied who kills his adversary than the party who is killed—but yet I am clear that all that is worth living for requires that the risk should sometimes be encountered. In nine cases out of ten, both parties are decidedly wrong—fool-hardy, perhaps; or cowards, at heart, trying to get a name as fighting men. There is no necessity for a *gentleman* to meet such chaps, and the professed duelist is infamous. But there are cases (I need not specify them; they will suggest themselves at once to you) where gentlemen must fight—like gentlemen, or blackguards.

“Friday, June 29.

“I have been interrupted, and I dare say you wish that it had been the means of putting an untimely end to this prosing epistle. As however ours is a weekly post, it gives me leisure to *bore* you still further. I have no hesitation (nor would you either, my friend, if you were brought to the alternative) in preferring the gentleman’s mode of deciding a quarrel to the blackguard’s—and if men must fight (and it seems they will) there is not, *as in our politics*, a *third* alternative. A bully is as hateful as a Drawcansir: Abolish dueling and you encourage bullies as well in number as in degree, and lay every gentleman at the mercy of a cowardly pack of scoundrels. In fine, my good friend, the Yahoo must be kept down, by religion, sentiment, manners if you can—but he must be kept down.”<sup>1</sup>

Randolph’s pride in his veracity was like his pride in his courage—instinctive; repellent of the slightest intimation of reproach. “Not that my testimony wants evidence. I should like to see the man who would question it on a matter of fact,” were his words when the Missouri question was pending, and he was inveighing against the bad treatment, which he believed that he had received at the hands of Henry Clay, as the Speaker of the House.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, June 24, 1811, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 130.

Rarely has any man spoken so much and, in language so much heightened by the lively coloring of the fancy and imagination, and yet so rarely fallen into inaccuracy or misrepresentation. Baldwin truly declares: "He was a man of a scrupulous and religious veracity in word, act and thought."<sup>1</sup>

In his history of the United States, Schouler says that Randolph seems to have taken a touch of Indian treachery and dark reticence of purpose into his nature.<sup>2</sup> (a) This observation is worthy of one of those academic writers who cut out their historical figures from paper in forms to suit their own *a priori* conceptions. There was not a trace of treachery or sinister reticence in Randolph's nature. A man more incapable of intrigue or invidious finesse in either public or private life, it would be hard to conceive. In all his words and actions, except when pride or distrust kept him silent, he was frank, candid, outspoken, sometimes almost ridiculously so, as we shall see. Most conclusively does his whole life bear out the statement of Randall, who was an uncompromising Jeffersonian, and by no means an unreserved admirer of Randolph: "He scorned meanness, duplicity or cowardice. His loves, like his hates, were sincere and vehement."<sup>3</sup>

Nor was Randolph more courageous and truthful than he was upright. He was a very honest man with a great fund of good sense, is the verdict of James Parton, who was writing just after the Civil War, when it was difficult for any man, North or South, to see anything except through the cracked lens of sectional prejudice. We will not repeat the tributes paid by Randolph's contemporaries to his sterling integrity both as a public man and a private gentleman. Nor is there any contradictory testimony whatever calling for the revision of another conclusion reached by Randall in his life of Jefferson: "His integrity

<sup>1</sup> *Party Leaders*, by J. G. B., 263.

<sup>2</sup> V. I, 453-454.

<sup>3</sup> *Life of Jefferson*, v. 3, 156.

was unquestionable."<sup>1</sup> Indeed, for many years Randolph led a life of the most rigid self-denial, in order to discharge his share of the British debt, due by his father's estate, which would have crushed him, if John Wickham, the attorney for his creditors, had not given him a long credit.

"My fortune, such as it is," he once said in a letter to Tazewell, "is solely due to my own self-denial in not spending money that I had not, and patiently practicing forbearance, until I could extricate my own and my brother's estate from the heavy mortgages that were eating it up. This I awkwardly effected. I actually lived in a cabin, covered with pegged shingles, because I had not one dollar to buy nails, and would not 'go to the store' for them; and many a drenching, the effects of which I now feel, have I sustained in consequence of the leaky roof when the wind was high. Old Major Scott [Major Joseph Scott, his manager] came in for a share too."

"Now," he goes on, "I am called upon to educate orphans and those who are not orphans; to pension widows and portion maidens."<sup>2</sup> Randolph simply loathed debt. "Mr. Speaker," he broke out on one occasion in Congress, "I have discovered the philosopher's stone! It is this, Sir: pay as you go! pay as you go!"<sup>3</sup> But his pecuniary prudence went hand in hand with a perfectly sound and wholesome comprehension of the precise function that money should perform in a well-ordered life.

"The muck worm whose mind 'knows no other work than money keeping or money getting,'" he wrote to Josiah Quincy, "is an object of pity and contempt; but I hold it essential to purity, dignity and pride of character that every man's expenses should bear a due relation to his means and prospects in life, and conceive few habits to me more

<sup>1</sup> V. 3, 156.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Feb. 29, 1826, Littleton Waller Tazewell, Jr., MSS.

<sup>3</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 343.

destructive of all that is noble and manly about us than a habit of profusion exceeding beyond all bounds those prospects."<sup>1</sup>

Could Poor Richard and Benjamin Franklin together have assigned more judiciously to money its proper position in the management of a human life? Indeed, now that we speak of Poor Richard, we might recall one of Randolph's favorite sayings, which is quite in Poor Richard's manner: "Get the money first and the thing afterwards."<sup>2</sup> The truth is that his long struggle with the British debt gave him a first-hand insight into the misery and meanness bred by pecuniary imprudence which no precepts, unimproved by his own personal experience, could ever have imparted to him. There are few sager reflections to be found anywhere than some of his observations on spendthrifts. After warning Dr. Dudley, in one of his letters, against a precious scoundrel, he continues in these words:

"But there is another description of persons, of far inferior turpitude, against all connexion with whom, of whatsoever degree, I would seriously warn you. This consists of men of broken fortunes, and all who are *loose* on the subject of pecuniary engagements. Time was, when I was fool enough to believe that a man might be negligent of such obligations, and yet be a very good fellow, &c.: but long experience has convinced me that he, who is lax in this respect, is utterly unworthy of trust in any other. He might do an occasional act of kindness (or what is falsely called generosity) when it lay in his way, and so may a prostitute, or a highwayman; but he would plunge his nearest friends and dearest connexions, the wife of his bosom, and the children of his loins, into misery and want, rather than forego the momentary gratification of appetite, vanity, or laziness. I have come to this conclusion slowly and painfully, but *certainly*. Of the Shylocks, and the smooth-visaged men of the world, I think as I believe you do. Certainly, if I were to seek for the hardest of hearts, the most

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Quincy*, p. 343.

<sup>2</sup> Bryan MSS.

obdurate, unrelenting, and cruel, I should find them among the most selfish of mankind. And who are the most selfish? The usurer, the courtier, and, above all, the spendthrift.

“If I press this subject, it is because (you will pardon me) I have observed in you, upon it, a sort of perversion of the intellectual faculty; an apparent absence to what is passing in the world around you, and an ignorance of the events and characters of the day, that has caused in me I know not whether most of surprise or vexation. My terms are strong, and such as you are in no danger of hearing from the sort of people I speak of; unless, indeed, you should happen to owe them money which it is not convenient to pay. Try them once as creditors, and you will find that even the Shylocks, we wot of, are not harder. Indeed, their situation enables them to give the victim a sort of respite which the others cannot grant.”<sup>1</sup>

The same thoughts are presented in an even more attractive garb in a letter which Randolph wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough in 1826:

“I can’t help being sorry for that poor man, to whom you were called the morning you wrote, although he did, some twenty or thirty years ago (how time passes!), attempt by a deep-laid scheme of . . ., to beggar a family that I was much attached to; one, too, with which he was nearly connected, and that he kept upon the most friendly terms with. His debts have floored him. It is strange, passing strange. People will get in debt; and, instead of working and starving out, they go on giving dinners, keeping carriages, and covering aching bosoms with smiling faces, go about greeting in the market-places, &c. I always think that I can see the anguish under the grin and grimace, like old mother Cole’s dirty flannel, peeping out beneath her Brussels lace. This killed poor H. H., and is killing, like a slow poison, all persons so circumstanced, who possess principle or pride. I never see one of these martyrs to false pride writhing under their own

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Jan. 17, 1822, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 234.

reflections, that I am not in some degree reconciled to the physical fire that I carry in my bosom."<sup>1</sup>

This letter was written during one of the years when Randolph's reasoning undoubtedly forsook him, but it is another illustration of the fact that, even if everything else, that made him what he was, when in mental health, deserted him at such crises, his command of pure, nervous English and his provident turn of mind did not.

Indeed, all of Randolph's instincts were correct and virtuous and true to the best moral and social traditions of the race oversea from which he sprang. Who, describing one of those English types of character, which are as genuine and sterling as the English watch, or the English woolens and boots that he wore, could do it better than he did in this description of Col. Joel Watkins, a man whose memory still lingers in Charlotte County like the scent of some fragrant herb about an old-time chest:

"On Sunday, the 2d of January, 1820, departed this life at an advanced age, beloved, honored and lamented by all who knew him, Col. Joel Watkins, of the County of Charlotte, and State of Virginia.

"Without shining abilities or the advantages of education, by plain and straightforward industry, under the guidance of old-fashioned honesty and practical good sense, he accumulated an ample fortune in which it is firmly believed by all who knew him there was not *one dirty shilling*.

"The fruits of his own labors he distributed with a promptitude and liberality, seldom equalled, never surpassed, in suitable provision to his children, at their entrance into life, and on every deserving object of private benevolence or public spirit; reserving to himself the means of a generous but unostentatious hospitality.

"Nor was he liberal of his money only; his time, his trouble were never withheld on the bench or in his neighborhood where they could be usefully employed.

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 6, 1826, Garland, v. 2, 265.



"If, as we are assured, the peace-makers are blessed, who shall feel stronger assurance of blessings than must have smoothed this old man's passage to the unknown world?"<sup>1</sup>

Randolph's training and bias were highly aristocratic, but his respect was bestowed upon every honest, worthy man of his acquaintance, however humble his station in life. In this regard, however, he did not differ from the other leading members of his class, who had a way in both peace and war of keeping in close and sympathetic working relations with the common mass of the whites about them, whose self-respect and independence of character maintained quite as distinct reservations as their own.

Nor was Randolph's esteem for an estimable man any keener than his reverence for a fine woman, matron or maid. In 1822, he wrote to Dr. Dudley:

"You know my opinion of female society. Without it, we should degenerate into brutes. This observation applies with ten-fold force to young men and those who are in the prime of manhood; for, after a certain time of life, the literary man may make a shift (a poor one I grant) to do without the society of ladies. To a young man nothing is so important as a spirit of devotion (next to his Creator) to some virtuous and amiable woman, whose image may occupy his heart and guard it from the pollution which besets it on all sides."<sup>2</sup>

And Jacob Harvey narrates an incident which demonstrates how careful Randolph was to see that any girl, to whom this important office was to be entrusted, should herself not be exposed to contamination:

"I was one morning looking over his books for my own amusement," says Harvey, "and observed that several of the prettiest editions were marked 'this for Miss ——.'"

"How is this," said I? "Some fair lady seems to have enchained you."

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 81.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 21, 1822, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 236.



““Oh, replied he, if you only knew her; the sweetest girl in the ‘Ancient Dominion’; a particular favorite of mine, Sir, and I shall have all these books beautifully bound in London, Sir, fit to grace her centre-table on my return.’

“I took up one of them—a volume of old plays—and, after reading a few pages, exclaimed: ‘Surely you have not read these plays lately, Mr. Randolph, or you could not present *this* book to Miss ——? It is too lascivious for her eyes.’

“He instantly ran his eye over the page; then took the book out of my hands and immediately endorsed on the back: ‘Not fit for Bet,’ [Elizabeth T. Coalter] and, turning to me, said with warmth: ‘You have done me an infinite service, Sir. I would not for worlds do aught to sully the purity of that girl’s mind. I *had* forgotten those plays, Sir, or they would not have found a place in my box. I abominate as much as you do, Sir, that vile style of writing which is intended to lessen our abhorrence of vice and throw ridicule on virtuous conduct. You have given me the hint, Sir. Come, assist me in looking over *all* these books lest some other black sheep may have found its way into the flock.’

“We accordingly went through the whole box, but found no other volume deserving of condemnation; much to Randolph’s satisfaction. He then presented me with several books as keepsakes; and he wanted to add several more, but I had to decline positively. His generosity knew no bounds; and, had I been avaricious of mental food, I might have become possessed of half his travelling library.”<sup>1</sup>

And like a spotless lily of the valley, modestly lifting its head above its tuft of green frondage, is the figure of Marion Coleman as it is presented to our eye by a tender letter from Randolph to Elizabeth T. Coalter:

“I have just received a letter from Mr. William Leigh informing me that Marion Coleman is at the point of death. She is the descendant of my Aunt Murray (great-grand-daughter) and consequently a relation of mine. Her father lives just opposite to my Lower Quarter, and she seemed to be

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 370.

the only person in that neighborhood who felt a lively interest in my health and welfare. Exceedingly pious, but without cant, all her friends looked up to her. I was in the habit of sending little presents to her, and receiving others and kind notes and messages in return. Hardly a week passed that I did not receive some evidence of her regard. It was a pure friendship on both sides. She was the only link in that part of the world that seemed to connect me with my species. A purer being never lived. She seemed ever conscious that she stood in the presence of her Maker, and her heart overflowed with love for him and her fellow-creatures. She had declined many matrimonial offers, and devoted herself to her family and her neighbors. This intelligence sinks my spirits more than I could have thought."<sup>1</sup>

In describing a friend of Delia, the wife of his friend, Joseph Bryan, Randolph himself resorted to the fair forms of the flower garden for the purpose of picturing her as he saw her through the medium of his own refined sensibilities.

"The natural association of Delia with Charlotte," he wrote to Nicholson, "recalls me to the untimely blight of that 'modest crimson-tipped flower.' Had she lived to feel the ecstasy of a mother, to hug the dear cause of all her sufferings in her arms, I could scarcely have regretted her fate. Nicholson, my friend, when we think on the doom which nature as well as society has pronounced upon the better half of our race, should we not rejoice when they are snatched away before they have drained the bitter cup of neglect and sorrow? You have sometimes told me that I am romantic; perhaps, at this moment, I am under the influence of such a sentiment, but I feel that I could not bewail the lot of a sister of mine taken from the world before she had tasted of calamity. I should commiserate myself, her husband and her friends, but for her I should rejoice."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Feb. 18, 1829, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Bizarre, Nov. 8, 1805, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

Nicholson was right when he said that Randolph was romantic. Could any homage short of that inspired by some Laura or Beatrice surpass that of the following letter to his niece?

"I agree with you entirely about Mrs. Bell, whose manners are as perfect as her form—and that is faultless. *Did* you ever behold such a shape? I never did in sculpture or painting, although I have seen a cast of the Venus De Medici and a proof engraving of that of Canova. Her temper, manners and principles and her whole deportment and conduct through life have corresponded with that form. She has borne the reverses of fortune, as she ought to have done, with a becoming fortitude, which is very different from insensibility or thoughtless gaiety. She is now called upon, I grieve to say it, to exert still greater resignation. I feel assured that, under this trial, she will not be found wanting; which may He, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb and binds up the broken-hearted, in his infinite mercy, grant for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen! When you see her, make her sensible to my profound respect and sympathy for her.

"She gave me a plant of Citronalis (I hope Mr. G. [Francis W. Gilmer] has given you a taste for botany) which I fear was swept away in the wreck. I set out to save it, but had to stop by the way on account of the weather. If you can speak to her on such a subject, get another for me and keep it. I will send 100 miles for it. I had vainly enquired after the orphans to whom she has been more than a mother. Are they gone home to their friends in England? They will never find one like their uncle's wife and widow I must now say."<sup>1</sup>

It was impossible, of course, for anyone to place woman upon such a high pedestal as this without having man grovelling at its base, and a letter from Randolph to his sister, Fanny Bland Coalter, not only brings out the fact that he thought Virginia wives entirely too good for their husbands, but contains some general observations on marriage that are worth recalling:

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Feb. 5, 1822, Bryan MSS.

“Of an ardent and enthusiastic temper in my early day, I carried my confidence in mankind to a blamable and pernicious excess. No man ever poured out his whole soul [more freely] in friendship or in love than your poor old brother.

“And what is friendship but a name?  
And love is still an emptier sound!”

A great and good man has said that marriages would be not less happy if they were made by the Lord Chancellor, without regard to the wishes of the parties. Now, although I have at least as much confidence in you as in our citizen Chancellor, yet I am unwilling you should marry me without marriage articles stipendiary for separate maintenance. It must be specially provided that the lady never has *fits*, except *sola*, never at table, and without change of color; and provided the lady would be satisfied with one house, whilst I occupied another, part of my objections might be overcome. Take notice! *this is upon honor* and must go no further.

“My dearest sister, long experience has convinced me that anyone of your sex for whom I feel any sentiment of love or regard may torture me at will; that I lie entirely at her mercy; and that my whole life must be rendered wretched in order that she may have daily and visible evidence of her power over me. When she is satisfied of this fact, she then commiserates my sufferings and repents her of her cruelty, like the boy who torments his bird to death and then cries over it; only to do so again the next time. An unhappy human face is no very delightful spectacle at any time, but in the power of a woman, and a woman that one loves, it is agony to behold it. At the same time, from my heart I believe that the women of Virginia are the best wives in the world and that, generally speaking, they are too good for the grog-drinking beasts to whom they are yoked; but it has been my lot to see two of the most uxorious of men rendered wretched by the intolerable caprice and ill-temper of their wives; women who had everything but that one thing needful to recommend them, like the play of Hamlet, in which the part of Hamlet was omitted, owing to the indisposition of an actor, and how often have

I seen the most amiable and worthy of mankind received with cold and austere looks, his affection barely tolerated, his friends slighted, his house that the master would have made the temple of hospitality cold and repulsive; himself feebly striving against his situation, and at last sinking under it, the whole man changed, countenance, voice, manners, dress."<sup>1</sup>

It is to be hoped that this outspoken letter was received in good part by Mrs. Coalter, whose own letters show that she had a husband for whom she entertained the most devoted affection.

Randolph was not insensible to any of the infirmities of women, much as he was inclined to rhapsodize about them: "*Graces à Dieu*, I make a shift to get along without quite as many heartaches as I have been made to feel by female caprice and affectation," he wrote to Theodore Dudley, shortly after his removal from the home of Judith Randolph at Bizarre to his own house at Roanoke.<sup>2</sup> The ejaculation is evidently a hit at Judith, whom he sincerely admired and loved, but whose temper occasionally collided with his own and struck off a momentary spark of petulant impatience. "To Bizarre! What a reception!" is one entry in the Diary under the date of Oct. 15, 1810. "Tantrums of Mrs. R." is another which he made, apparently, in the year 1809, stopping short with these words as if Prudence had suddenly laid her finger upon his lips. In a letter to his niece, he admonishes her to take care of herself, not by housing and coddling, but by good, warm, substantial clothing (not fashionable fig-leaf attire).<sup>3</sup> In another letter to his niece, he has something to say about women on whose honor no shade of suspicion could be cast, and who were notable and not ill-natured in their families, but whose ungovernable tongues rendered them more odious and noxious than some of their frailer sisters

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Dec. 10, 1812, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Nov. 30, 1810, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 78.

<sup>3</sup> Washington, Feb. 5, 1822, Bryan MSS.

on whom they would look down with scorn—maybe with compassion.<sup>1</sup> (a)

“You greatly misunderstand my true meaning,” he once wrote to his niece, “if you suppose that, in decrying the romantic, I would lean towards the worldly-minded. The silly girl, who throws herself away on some self-imagined hero, is an object of contemptuous pity; but the woman, who barter her person away in marriage, when she cannot bestow her heart, is in my eyes the most odious object in all nature. No, my child, so far from seeking to repress, much less extinguish, such feelings as you have poured forth, I would cherish them as the source of the highest enjoyment which the world can neither give nor take away. God knows (I take not his name in vain) that to me they have been the fountain of all that partook of happiness, and, whenever a gleam of joy passed over my soul, it is to them alone I am indebted for it.”<sup>2</sup>

“I concur most heartily in the sentiments you express,” he wrote on another occasion to his niece, “and I have seen such miserable effects from match-breaking and match-making that I hold match-makers and match-breakers in greater abhorrence than any other species of incendiary, whether in the shape of old tabbies, their kittens, or certain gossips of the male kind who are ashamed of their sex and trench upon the privileges of the envious sisterhood.”<sup>3</sup>

This was a singular thing for a man to have said who was believed by his friend Joseph Bryan to have exercised no little influence in bringing about the match between Delia and himself. Decidedly pungent, too, are these reflections in one of Randolph’s letters to Theodore Dudley:

“The love of power and of admiration (and the last is subordinate and instrumental to the first) is woman’s ruling passion. Whatever be the affectation of the day it is pushed

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 6, 1824, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Nov. 20, 1825, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Mar. 20, 1824, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

to the extreme. Is it timidity, she shrinks from a mouse. Is it fortitude, she braves Heaven itself."<sup>1</sup>

But, apart from a few pettish aspersions like these, Randolph was a staunch champion and a warm admirer of women, and regarded marriage and all the wholesome interests that spring from it with a degree of profound approval of which no one without strong domestic affections is capable.

"I am reading for the second time," he once wrote to Theodore Dudley, "an admirable novel called *Marriage*. It is commended by the great unknown in his *Legend of Montrose*. I wish you would read it. Perhaps, it might serve to palliate some of your romantic notions (for I despair of a cure) on the subject of love and marriage. A man who marries a woman that he does not esteem and treat kindly is a villain; but marriage was made for man and, if the woman be good-tempered, healthy (a qualification scarcely thought of now-a-days, all important as it is), chaste, cleanly, economical and not an absolute fool, she will make a better wife than 9 out of 10 deserve to have. To be sure, if to these beauty and understanding be added, all the better. Neither would I quarrel with a good fortune, if it has produced no ill effect on the possessor—a rare case. I was in hopes you would not let G. [Gilmer] carry off E. [Elizabeth T. Coalter] from you. That you may soon possess her or some other fair lady is my earnest wish.

"The cock crows for day, I suppose, but it is yet dark and I wish you good morning. 'It vanished at the crowing of the cock.'"<sup>2</sup>

"I am well persuaded," he also wrote to Theodore Dudley, "that few love matches are happy ones. One thing at least is true—that, if matrimony has its cares, celibacy has no pleasure. A Newton or a mere scholar may find employment in study; a man of literary taste can receive in books a powerful auxiliary, but a man must have a bosom friend and children around him

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, Nov. 16, 1810, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 74.

<sup>2</sup> 5 o'clock, Feb. 4, 1822, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 249.



to cherish and support the dreariness of old age. Do you remember A. V. [Abram Venable?]. He could neither read nor think; any wife, even a scolding one, would have been a blessing to that poor man. After all, 'suitability' is the true foundation for marriage. If the parties be suited to one another in age, situation in life (a man indeed may descend, where all else is fitting), temper and constitution, these are the ingredients of a happy marriage—or, at least, a convenient one, which is all that people of experience expect."<sup>1</sup>

Commenting tolerantly in a letter to his niece on the marriage of an old man, he said:

"I can conceive of nothing so divine as the union between two souls (and bodies too) and suited to each other in every respect, and each feeling for the other that sentiment so much talked of, so little felt, and consequently so little understood, called Love, which is in everybody's mouth and in almost nobody's heart. These are the grand prizes in the lottery which fall to so few that they can hardly come into the calculation of probabilities. Weak people play the fool on all occasions, but the wisest men have shown that in this matter they can play the fool too. It has so happened to me that I never had a connection or friend who married to please me, with one exception, and I have found in each instance, save that one, a woeful falling off in the regard of my married friends towards me."<sup>2</sup>

In another letter to his niece, he makes the lugubrious assertion that even a funeral was as nothing in point of seriousness to a wedding.<sup>3</sup> The marriage of a youthful pair, with which he was in any way connected by ties of relationship or friendship, was always an important event to Randolph: "Give to the bride and bridegroom my cordial congratulations on the event," he said in one of

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Feb. 5, 1822, Sunrise, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 252.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Aug. 18, 1828, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Washington, Dec. 15, 1828, Bryan MSS.



his letters to Theodore Dudley. "I know not how to offer them to my worthy old neighbor—to whom present me in the most friendly terms."<sup>1</sup>

Once, after telling Theodore Dudley that certain persons, including a Mr. W., had made friendly inquiries about him, he adds: "So did Mrs. W., who is, 'as ladies like to be who love their lords,' and will present him in a very short time with a chopping boy or girl; perhaps both."<sup>2</sup> Some four years later, he wrote to Theodore Dudley from Roanoke: "I have seen W. M. W. [Wm. M. Watkins?] once by accident on the road; rather I rode as far as his lane and met him. Asked him to dine with me, but Mrs. W. was in daily expectation of the *sage femme*, and he was obliged to watch the incubation."<sup>3</sup> That rich vocabulary never lacked a delicate paraphrase with which to veil or shade any reflection or idea. Nor did Randolph's interest in marriage cease with the usual harbingers of matrimonial fruitfulness; as witness this letter to Nicholson written just after Mrs. Nicholson had, or was supposed to have, given birth to "a fine child."

"I am not indeed so happy as to be a father, and, perhaps, I am incapable of entering fully into the feelings of a parent; yet I am not insensible to any circumstance in which you are so deeply interested. Nor am I without a strong conception of what the emotions of a parent, and more especially of a husband, must be on such an occasion. A new object of regard is created to him, a new tie binds him to the partner who presents it; it is at once a pledge and source of their affection. I do not believe that there is a man in the world so fond of children as myself, and I am unable to account for my having lived so long without them. There is no object so interesting to me as a beautiful woman with an infant in her arms, clinging to her breast."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 31, 1816, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 181.

<sup>2</sup> Richm., Mar. 12, 1817, *Id.*, 199.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, June 24, 1821, *Id.*, 222.

<sup>4</sup> Feb. 15, 1800, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

Randolph, of course, had pronounced ideas about the limits to which the province of womanhood should be extended. Returning from a concert in 1820, he says to Dr. Brockenbrough:

“I felt very much ashamed of being there; not because the room was mean and badly lighted and dirty, and the company ill-dressed, but because I saw for the first time an American woman singing for hire. I would import our actors, singers, tumblers and jack-puddings, if we must have such cattle, from Europe. Hyde de Neuville, a Frenchman, agreed with me ‘that, although the lady was universally admitted to be *very amiable*, it was a dangerous example.’ At first (*on dit*), she was unaffected and sang naturally, and I am told, agreeably enough; but now she is a bundle of ‘affectations’ (as Sir Hugh hath it) and reminds me of the little screech ‘*owels*’ as they say on ‘The Southside.’ Her voice is not bad, but she is utterly destitute of a single particle of taste or judgment.”<sup>1</sup>

But Randolph was not one of those early Americans who was so modest as to think that even the legs of a piano should be clothed with pantalettes. Ladies, he once wrote to Theodore Dudley, had, as Theodore knew, no legs.<sup>2</sup>

All this brings us back to our first point, that Randolph had that deep respect, partly inborn and partly inbred, for pure, good womanhood, without which a human being, whatever else he may be, can never be a true gentleman. Reproaching his niece on one occasion for not writing to him, he said:

“Now that we might interchange a letter every two or three days, your pen is to me no longer vocal. A surly bachelor might impute this to female caprice, but I know from experience that, in that respect, our sex has nothing to boast of over yours, while, in a great many others, you are far before us.

<sup>1</sup> Gailand, v. 2, 134.

<sup>2</sup> Baltimore, Feb. 18, 1816, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 174.

You are less selfish, capable of stronger and more constant attachments, and less swayed (whatever satirists may say or sing) by wealth or power."<sup>1</sup>

We can readily believe John Randolph Bryan when he tells us that, in the society of ladies, Randolph's manner was graceful, magnetic, and deferential to a degree that made him greatly admired by them<sup>2</sup>; and the forms of many beautiful and graceful or benignant women, besides those of his own mother, sister-in-law and niece and Maria Ward and the other women whom we have already mentioned, are mirrored in his letters. There are, for example: Delia, a Forman of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, the wife of his friend, Joseph Bryan, whom he pronounced "a charming woman," and whom, like another Cassio, wooing another Desdemona, for another Othello, he seems to have courted as assiduously for his friend as his friend courted her for himself; and Miss Pratt, another "Eastern Shore belle," whom he declared to be as amiable and accomplished as Delia.<sup>3</sup>

"I do not know how it is," he once wrote to Nicholson, an Eastern Shoreman, "that your State, and particularly your side of the Bay (to which we must annex Annapolis) shines in fine women. There is a marked character of excellence in their manners which is seldom seen elsewhere, at least out of Virginia. You see there is no combatting State prejudices."<sup>4</sup>

But, however sectional Randolph may have been in other respects, there was nothing sectional in the devoirs that he paid to attractive women, who, even in the darkest days of sectional discord, had a way peculiar to themselves of setting aside geographical, as well as other, barriers created by the passions or whims of men. One

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 31, 1824, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Mar. 27, 1878, Letter to Mr. Robertson, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Nicholson, Bizarre, July 1, 1804, Nicholson MSS., Libr Cong.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

of the most agreeable passages in that agreeable book, *Figures of the Past*, by Josiah Quincy, is that in which he tells us how fervently Randolph extolled in his presence the charms and virtues of a Boston lady (doubtless Mrs. Christopher Gore). What he said, Quincy declares, could be compared only to the rhapsody of a lover.<sup>1</sup> When this lady was on one occasion *en route* from Washington to New England, he wrote repeatedly to Theodore Dudley, who was then a medical student in Philadelphia, urging him not to let her and her husband pass through Philadelphia without seeing them. In one letter to Dudley, who had become a capital sportsman at Bizarre and Roanoke, he said: "I hope you will not miss them in their passage through Philadelphia. You are good at a flying shot."<sup>2</sup> But he never paid Mrs. Gore a handsomer compliment than just after his defeat in 1813, when he might well have felt its smart too keenly not to have been thinking of the ingratitude of men to the utter exclusion of the blandishments of women. "It releases me from an odious thralldom," he wrote to Dudley, "and I assure you, my dear Theodore, I have thought, and yet think, much more of the charming Mrs. G. than of the election."<sup>3</sup> Not so heartfelt, however, was this declaration as one which he made to Dr. Brockenbrough when he heard that Mrs. Brockenbrough had been deeply affected by his defeat in 1827. The tear shed by her eyes, he said, was more precious in his own than the pearl of Cleopatra.<sup>4</sup> Other captivating Maryland women besides Delia and Miss Pratt won his admiration. "Tell Mrs. G.," he wrote to Theodore Dudley on one occasion, "that her friends, the Goldsboroughs [of Maryland], are quite well; that Miss Anna Maria is as beautiful as ever."<sup>5</sup> In the same letter,

<sup>1</sup> P. 211.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Feb. 11, 1813, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 137.

<sup>3</sup> Farmville, Apr. 16, 1813, *Id.*, 141.

<sup>4</sup> Jan. 20, 1827, *Garland*, v. 2, 284.

<sup>5</sup> Feb. 10, 1813, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 136.

he says: "Mrs. Horsey, with whom I dined today, and Mrs. Bayard enjoy their usual good health, good humor and good spirits." In another place, he speaks of Anna Maria, who afterwards became the wife of Wm. Fitzhugh, of Virginia, as "La Belle Goldsborough."<sup>1</sup> After a visit to Nicholson on the Eastern Shore of Maryland in 1801, he asks Nicholson, when he sees Mrs. Lloyd, or the young ladies, or his charming relation, Miss M., to present him to them in Nicholson's best manner; and then he adds: "The sweet notes of 'Lucy' still vibrate in my ear."<sup>2</sup>

In many cases, Randolph's habit of initialing proper names in his letters is not a matter of much concern to us; but at times his letters are so profusely besprinkled with such initials that we feel as if we were moving about at a masked ball.

A Maryland "Miss," mentioned by Randolph in his letters, is one of the three Catons, granddaughters of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, who afterwards married respectively, the Earl of Stafford, the Duke of Leeds, and the Marquis of Wellesley.<sup>3</sup>

How necessary the society of women was to Randolph, we may partially infer from a letter which he wrote to his niece in the year 1823:

"You describe," he said, "that to which I have been for many months a perfect stranger—refined female society. My infirmities have disabled me for evening parties, and indeed those of Washington are so crowded and promiscuous that little enjoyment can be derived from them. Mrs. Decatur, I am told, has a small, select company assembled at her house once or twice a week, but it is four miles off, and I have not seen her since poor Decatur's death. I called last year as soon as I understood she received company, but she had not the courage to see me, and, to say the truth, I was not sorry to be

<sup>1</sup> Richmond, Mar. 20, 1814, *Id.*, 157.

<sup>2</sup> Bizarre, July 18, 1801, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>3</sup> Richm., Mar. 20, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 156.

spared the interview. I have not the pleasure to know the Mrs. N. you mention, although I am well acquainted with her father and slightly with her husband. We have a very sensible and agreeable lady in this house (Mrs. Benton) but we see very little of her; her time, when she is not abroad, being engrossed by a charming little girl not quite a year old. I sometimes meet Miss Spear upon the walk before our door. She is a very intelligent, well-informed and well-bred woman, and I find in our interviews of 10 or 12 minutes' promenade much entertainment. Do you ever see my old friend Mrs. Cunningham? When you do, pray present my best respects to her. I verily believe that I owe my life to her and her husband's kindness six years ago when I was ill at their house."<sup>1</sup> (a)

Mrs. H., "a most charming woman," and "pretty Mrs. W." are two other women whom he mentions in one of his letters to Theodore Dudley.<sup>2</sup> To Mrs. Cunningham he was not more grateful than he was to the daughter of Philip Barton Key for nursing him in his sickness, and to her he paid this cordial tribute in a letter to her cousin, Francis Scott Key:

"Miss Key (your Uncle Philip's daughter) is I presume 'unmarried,'" he said, "for there was nobody in the District deserving of her when I knew it; and she has too much good sense to throw herself away on flimsy members of Congress or diplomatic adventurers. I often think of the pain I suffered at her father's more than 11 years ago, of the kindness and attention I then received. Cripple as I then thought myself, I had no forecast that in so short a time I should be almost superannuated."<sup>3</sup>

Nor should we by any means omit a paragraph from one of his letters to Theodore Dudley written from Richmond,

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 6, 1823, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>2</sup> York Bldgs., Dec. 27, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 170.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 2, 109.

in which his admiration for fine women ranged over the whole Atlantic Coast from Richmond to Boston:

“There are two not ‘unknown,’ but *unmentioned*, ladies who have spoken of you to me in very flattering terms; the fashionable Miss M.— and the elegant Mrs. W.—. The latter expressed her regret at being from home when you called. Mrs. Bell often inquires after you. She is my chief resource of female society and reminds me of Mrs. G! The dignity and elegance of her pursuits, compared with the frivolous occupations or inane indolence of our ladies in general, give a new charm to the beauty of her person and the polish of her manners.”<sup>1</sup>

So, it is evident, after all, that it is not a Maryland or a Virginia, but a New England, woman—the marvelous Mrs. G——, who was in his eyes of “her gentle sex the paragon.” (a)

Scattered through Randolph’s journals, too, are the names of many Southside Virginia ladies whom he met from time to time in his social circuits in that region, or received at Roanoke; such as Mrs. Tabb, Mrs. Banister, Mrs. Deane, Madame Carrington, and the Ladies Bruce. “Ladies,” is a word which frequently recurs in these intimate records of his private life. Once, in amusing juxtaposition to one of the meteorological jottings in which they abound, he makes this confusing entry, which is certainly suggestive of glowing charms: “Ladies 76°.”<sup>2</sup>

The pleasure that Randolph derived from the society of women is enough in itself to negative the idea that he was a mere gloomy misanthrope. This idea was entertained by even such a writer as Baldwin. “He was the most unsocial of men,” he says in one place<sup>3</sup>; and in another he terms him an “aristocratic anchorite.”<sup>4</sup> This erroneous conception of Randolph’s life and character is doubtless

<sup>1</sup> Richm., Mar. 20, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 156.

<sup>2</sup> *Va. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>3</sup> *Party Leaders*, 228.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, 214.

attributable to the fact that Baldwin wrote his essay at a time and under circumstances that made him dependent mainly upon Garland's *Life of Randolph* for his knowledge of Randolph's social traits. Unfortunately, the social side of that biography is principally made up of the unreserved letters in which Randolph laid bare the most secret recesses of his soul to Dr. Brockenbrough after his body and mind had become deeply cankered by disease. He was not "the most unsocial of men," nor was he an aristocratic or any other sort of anchorite. It is true that with advancing years and growing infirmities he sometimes became peevish when some rustic neighbor taxed his time and strength unduly with his uncongenial companionship, or he was called upon to receive "unmeaning visits" from some one whose call was inspired by mere curiosity or conventionality. But his letters, when read as a whole, and, above all, his Diary and other journals demonstrate beyond the possibility of reasonable controversy that, except when tortured by physical anguish, or transformed by mental distraction, he was an intensely social being. And, indeed, no matter how miserable he was, his yearning for the society of those, who were truly dear to him, underwent but little change. All agree that in his happier hours he was a charming conversationalist and a delightful companion. Testifying in the Randolph will litigation, Dr. Thomas Robinson deposed that he had had many years of close intimacy with Randolph before he removed from Prince Edward County to take up his residence in Petersburg, and that, during the interval between 1800 and 1805, Randolph was "remarkably gay in his temper and warm in his affections"; and that, even after he had become more serious and reserved and was more sleepless than any person whom the witness had ever known, in consequence of his love affair, and would frequently, in the course of the night, exclaim, "Macbeth hath murdered sleep," he recovered in a degree, and re-



sumed in a measure, his gaiety and cheerfulness."<sup>1</sup> This, the reader should bear in mind, is the testimony of a man who was not friendly to Randolph during the later years of his life, and fixes the real beginning of Randolph's mental disturbances at quite an early period. "His conversation," we are told by Sawyer, who knew him well, "was as agreeable and instructive as his manners were polished, gentlemanly and polite."<sup>2</sup> In another place in his biography, Sawyer pays a still more emphatic tribute to Randolph's social gifts:

"He was fond of a social circle around his parlor fire of an evening," he says. "He was the soul of conversation, every person preferring to hear him than to hear themselves talk. He was as brilliant and original on these occasions as he was on the floor of Congress, and would sit up till midnight if he found a few friends willing to remain as long to listen to his discourses."<sup>3</sup>

To Sawyer we owe two stories about Randolph which, though destitute of any great degree of point, show how facetious and light-hearted he could be in 1807 at Washington with the members of his mess. On one occasion, when Randolph was complaining of a hard bargain to which he had been held by Melvil, his tailor, a member of the mess interrupted him and said that Randolph was not acquainted with the mode of shopping prevalent in Washington; that the Washington merchants had two prices—an asking price and a taking price, and that it had been his own habit to send his wife around to make all the purchases for the family, by which he had effected a saving of 15 to 20%. To this interruption Randolph merely replied: "I had rather my wife should make a living any other way but one than that." a reply which Sawyer says

<sup>1</sup> *Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor.*, Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>2</sup> P. 118.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, p. 45.

his character as an old bachelor made even more comical than it would otherwise have been. A few evenings afterwards, Randolph took his turn at interruption. James M. Garnett, who had recently been shooting canvas-back ducks, was telling a story about another sportsman whom he had met on his little excursion.

"The man," he said, "had followed a large flock till it entered a cove, and secreted himself behind a log, to await an opportunity to get a number in a range. After waiting in the cold for sometime, and finding a fair chance to place his gun over the log to take rest, and just as he had taken sight, and was ready to pull trigger, what should he see but another long gun directly opposite, aiming at the same object. He had hardly time to drop down behind the log before away blazed the other sportsman, the whole load coming into the log behind which he was——"

"Lying," broke in Randolph hilariously, to the great diversion of the company.<sup>1</sup>

This, of course, was when Randolph wore the rose of youth upon him, so far as the premature decline of his health ever permitted him to wear a fresh one at all. But, even 14 or 15 years later, the social vivacity which these stories manifest had not died out, because it is of this period in Randolph's life that Thomas H. Benton is speaking when he bears instructive testimony to Randolph's social accomplishments. "His temper was naturally gay and social, and so indulged, when suffering of mind and body permitted. He was the charm of the dinner table, where his cheerful and sparkling wit delighted every ear, lit up every countenance, and detained every guest."<sup>2</sup>

The intimacy between Randolph and Dr. Brockenbrough was such that Randolph spent weeks at a time in the house of the latter at Richmond, which afterwards, when it was the official home of Jefferson Davis, became

<sup>1</sup> Sawyer, 30.

<sup>2</sup> *30 Years' View*, 474.

known as "the White House of the Confederacy";<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Brockenbrough is credited with the statement that Randolph was the "most agreeable and interesting inmate imaginable."<sup>2</sup> "In conversational powers," the *Reminiscences* of Jacob Harvey declare, "he was surpassed by none, and rarely equalled by any, of his distinguished contemporaries."<sup>3</sup> Harvey further says that he could not imagine a greater delight than it would be to him to repeat the voyage on which Randolph was his fellow-passenger in 1822.<sup>4</sup> John Lambert, an English traveller, after expressing an unfavorable opinion of Randolph's physical appearance, adds:

"His voice is somewhat feminine; but that is little noticed the moment he has entered fully upon his subject, whether it be at the convivial table or in the House of Representatives. The defects of his person are then forgotten in one continued blaze of shrewd, sensible and eloquent remarks."<sup>5</sup>

In his notes, Nathan Loughborough expresses regret that there had been no Boswell to preserve Randolph's "brilliant colloquial displays."<sup>6</sup>

All this praise is so absolute that we feel as if we were treading upon somewhat safer ground when we find the same laudation, dashed with a little acerbity, in the letters of Elijah H. Mills, a Senator from Massachusetts. In a letter written in 1816, Mills thus describes Randolph:

"He is really a most singular and interesting man; regardless entirely of form and ceremony in some things, and punctilious to an extreme in others. He yesterday dined with us. He was dressed in a rough, coarse short hunting-coat, with small clothes and boots, and over his boots a pair of coarse

<sup>1</sup> *Va. Homes &c.*, by Lancaster, 130.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 133.

<sup>3</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 2. 120.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Travels Through Canada and The U. S.*, v. 2, 417.

<sup>6</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

cotton leggings tied with strings round his legs. He engrossed almost the whole conversation, and was exceedingly amusing as well as eloquent and instructive.”<sup>1</sup>

In another letter written in 1822, Mills said:

“Our Massachusetts people, and I among the number, have grown great favorites with Mr. Randolph. He has invited me to dine with him twice and he has dined with us as often. He is now what he used to be in his best days; in good spirits, with fine manners and the most fascinating conversation. . . . For the last two years, he has been in a state of great perturbation, and has indulged himself in the ebullitions of littleness and acerbity, in which he exceeds almost any man living. He is now in better humor, and is capable of making himself exceedingly interesting and agreeable. How long this state of things may continue may depend upon accident or caprice. He is therefore not a desirable inmate or a safe friend, but, under proper restrictions, a most entertaining and instructive companion.”<sup>2</sup>

A view that Mills gives us of Randolph in 1826, four years later, was, doubtless, tinged by impressions left upon him by the unsettled condition of Randolph’s mind in that year. Mills was then sick, and Randolph was calling on him oftener than usual for that reason.

“He now lives within a few doors of me, and has called almost every evening and morning to see me. This has been very kind of him, but is no earnest of continued friendship. In his likings and dislikings, as in everything else, he is the most eccentric being upon the face of the earth, and is as likely to abuse friend as foe; hence, among all those with whom he has been associated during the last 30 years, there is scarcely an individual whom he can call his friend. At times, he is the most entertaining and amusing man alive, with manners the most pleasant and agreeable; (a) and, at other times, he is

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 19, 1816, *Proceedings Mass. Hist. Soc.* (1881-2), v. 19, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 15, 1822, *Proceedings Mass. Hist. Soc.* (1881-2), v. 19, 32.

sour, morose, crabbed, ill-natured and sarcastic, rude in manners and repulsive to everybody. Indeed, I think he is partially deranged and seldom in the full possession of his reason."<sup>1</sup>

What Randolph thought of Mills we have little means of knowing, beyond an exclamation in one of his letters: "Poor little Mills!"<sup>2</sup> But this abrupt way of disposing of a man is entirely too much in the manner of Thomas Carlyle to be at all final. One thing is certain: If Mills had not been a very sensible, worthy man, Randolph would never have sought his society as he did.

One of the impressions left upon the mind of Randolph's time by his conversation was that of a memory almost preternaturally retentive. In his *Figures of the Past*, Josiah Quincy tells us that, in the course of a conversation, which he had with Randolph at Washington in 1826, Randolph, when asked by him just where he would find a paragraph in the works of Edmund Burke, which the former had quoted during the conversation, referred him to a copy of Burke in the Congressional Library, and specified unerringly from memory the very shelf and the very place on it where the volumes stood and the number and page of the particular volume in which the paragraph would be found.<sup>3</sup>

In his *Recollections of John Randolph*, we are informed by the Rev. Wm. S. Lacy that, on one occasion, when a quotation from Sallust, used by Wm. B. Giles in a political essay, which Randolph was reading aloud to a group of his friends under the ancient elms, that shaded the court house yard at Prince Edward Court House, was pronounced very apt by some of Randolph's auditors, Randolph remarked: "It is good Latin, but it is not Sallust's Latin"; and, taking out his pencil, wrote on the margin of

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 10, 1826, *Id.*, 49.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 272.

<sup>3</sup> *Figures of the Past*, 214.

the newspaper from which he had been reading what he remembered as the true version and said: "Here, gentlemen, is the language that Sallust uses *in usum Delphini*, and I'll bet my Betsy Robertson [his riding mare] against the sorriest gelding on the ground I am right and Mr. Giles is wrong"; and so it proved when a copy of Sallust was shortly afterwards produced and examined.<sup>1</sup>

The testimony of Jacob Harvey on the same subject is equally amazing; indeed so much so that we cannot but again suspect that Harvey's genius was just a little too lively for the responsibilities of sober narration. According to his account, which is extraordinary enough, even when the bright froth on its surface has been blown away, Randolph had a knowledge of the geography and topography of Great Britain which Pennant might have envied. He even exhibited the most intimate familiarity with the most important light-houses and the principal headlands on the British coast; indeed with the latitude and longitude of different points on it. In bet after bet between Randolph and the Captain of the *Amity*, the Captain, Harvey tells us, was floored by Randolph's superior knowledge in these respects. Later, the Captain, after looking at the compass at Randolph's request, told him how the ship was heading; whereupon Randolph offered to bet him a pipe of wine or of Schuydam gin that, if the *Amity* continued exactly on her present course, she would strike Sligo Head. The Captain, not unmindful of his previous disappointments, refused to bet, but said that he thought that they would hit the "Mull of Cantiro." Upon reference to the chart, however, it was ascertained that Randolph was right.<sup>2</sup> Nor was this all. Harvey found that Randolph was intimately acquainted with every part of England, Scotland, and Ireland, not merely with their cities, towns, and villages, including the streets,

<sup>1</sup> *Union Seminary Mag.* (1893-94), v. 5, 1-10.

<sup>2</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 313, 389.

lanes, and alleys of London, but also with their country seats; and that he could repeat the pedigree of every noted race horse then alive, describe every celebrated horse-race which had occurred within the last fifty years, and even remembered the names of the riders who took part in them.<sup>1</sup> (a)

The root of this minute knowledge of Great Britain and British conditions was, of course, Randolph's deep-seated partiality for England. Harvey says that, when the *Amity* was running along the coast of Ireland, Randolph stated facts about its physical features which might have fallen from the lips of an Irish country gentleman rather than from those of a Virginia planter who had never been across the Atlantic before; and that, when Randolph obtained his first view of England, he shed tears of delight, exclaiming: "Thank God that I have lived to behold the land of Shakespeare, of Milton, of my forefathers! May her greatness increase through all times!"<sup>2</sup>

But love England as he did, he never lost sight of her duty to Ireland. "An Irish Tory, Sir, I never could abide," he said on one occasion to Harvey.<sup>3</sup>

Even at Roanoke, alien to England as were its two crude dwellings, its slave cabins, its black bondsmen, its unsubdued woods, and its only partially subdued fields, an English coach, English harness and saddlery, English plate, English clothes and boots, English books, and an English newspaper, side by side with the *Richmond Enquirer*,<sup>4</sup> evidenced the fact that to Randolph at any rate the American Revolution had not been one of those mighty erosive agencies which leaves nothing behind it but an unbroken sea separating two completely divided headlands. The latter part of the Diary contains a mass of

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 313; v. 2, 28, 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, v. 1, 391.

<sup>3</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 6.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from J. R. to James Monroe, Feb. 28, 1894, *Monroe Papers*, v. 10, 1252, Libr. Cong.

information relating to English peers, peeresses, commoners, scapegraces, and wantons, which we should be glad to have had displaced by a mass of similar information more in keeping with the spirit of our own age and country. He was almost as much at home in London as was Benjamin Franklin:

“My physical comforts here,” he wrote to his niece in 1830, “are greater than I could have at home, and there you know I am without society. I have also many other resources; a London newspaper (how unlike our low scurrilous press!) for my daily breakfast; the National Gallery of Pictures by great masters not 150 yards off. The grand menagerie of wild beasts where I can see God in his creatures is close at hand. I have not been to any theatre or public place except to be presented to the King, and very few of my old acquaintances know of my being in London. My chiefest pleasure and delight, walking through the streets and observing upon the inexhaustible wonders of London, is cut off, and with it many a lucky purchase of books which I used to rummage out of the holes and corners of this miraculous city.”<sup>1</sup>

So wedded was Randolph to England that, after his return from England, even his devoted friend, Wm. Leigh, thought that it would be better for him to live in England than at Roanoke. He could not go through a stormy session of Congress; neither could he live in solitude at home, Judge Leigh believed.<sup>2</sup>

One of the most interesting forms that the tenacious memory of Randolph assumed was that of frequent and apt quotations from the ancient and English classics. Calhoun thought that he quoted too much. A third person might well think that Calhoun himself quoted too little. We can only say that no public speaker ever quoted prose or poetry more appositely, or was less sub-

<sup>1</sup> London, Dec. 21, 1830, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to Clay, Halifax, Mar. 10, 1833, *Clay Papers*, Libr. Cong.



ject to the reproach, just or unjust, which caused Disraeli on a memorable occasion to advise Sir Robert Peel to stick to quotation because he never quoted anything that had not already received the meed of parliamentary approbation. To realize how infinitely superior in point of real culture Randolph was to most of his parliamentary contemporaries in Congress, we have but to compare his quotations with theirs, and, even if he did use a trite Latin phrase, or quote one or more commonplace lines of poetry, the tame words, transmuted by their highly original context, seemed to undergo a change like that which is wrought when a common twig or blade of grass becomes incrustated with bright frost crystals in the night. His memory bore his stores of knowledge so lightly that an implement received by him from the hand of another seemed to fit him as readily as one of his own. What he knew he did not acquire by a process of veneering, but by a process of absorption and saturation.

In addition to his lively temperament, his social sympathies, and his intellectual endowments, Randolph possessed most of the tastes which help to promote the happiness of human society in its narrower sense. He was not only fond of singing, but he had a good voice himself.

"I once staid all night with Mr. Randolph," says James W. Bouldin in his *Recollections*, "and for some reason, which I do not remember, I slept in the same room with him. Having gone to bed, Mr. Randolph at a late hour of the night, roused me by setting his books to rights and singing:

"Fresh and strong the breeze is blowing,  
As your bark at anchor rides.'

I thought his *singing* as far surpassed *other men's* singing as his *speaking* surpassed *other men's* speaking."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 11.

He was a good whist and chess player.<sup>1</sup> He was not indifferent to good fare when his health was such as to make food something more than a mere staff of life to him; smoked cigars occasionally, at any rate, and wished for a companion with whom to share a pipe and bottle. (a) How addicted he was to racing, an eminently social pastime, and to shooting, a social pastime with all but the grossly selfish, we shall presently see. If Baldwin could have read the Diary and briefer journals of Randolph, before expressing the opinion that the latter lacked a social spirit, he would have recanted his incorrect conception of Randolph's character. Of course, when Randolph resided at Bizarre or Roanoke he was not in the midst of such a stream of people as when he was at Washington or Richmond. Both Bizarre and Roanoke were in sequestered and sparsely settled regions, and no little space had to be traversed by the individuals who made up the social life of those places to render them real social centres; but, scattered everywhere throughout the territory in Virginia south of the James and north of the Roanoke, which stretched from the foothills of the Blue Ridge to Petersburg, were plantation homes which created a true social life that, natural and simple as it was, and powerless to vie with the ostentatious luxury and display of other communities of the United States at the present time as it would be, was distinguished by no common degree of dignity and refinement. In most of these homes, Randolph was throughout his life a frequent and a welcome guest, and not a few of them were those of beloved relations and friends. No detailed description of the Bizarre mansion house, which was sustained by a plantation of some 1,800 or 1,900 acres, lying on both sides of the Appomattox, is known to us. We only know that it was the second house that had stood upon the same site, and Latrobe simply says of it that there was nothing about its

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 331.

appearance to suggest oddity.<sup>1</sup> In a letter written by Randolph in the latter part of his life, however, we do get an interesting glimpse of its domestic economy and of its efficient and proud-spirited mistress—Judith Randolph. Indeed, the whole letter, with the exception of its concluding paragraph, is a vignette which might well have been added to our description in the preceding pages of this book of Southside Virginia. It was written after Randolph had returned from his asylum in the home of his friend John Marshall, to his own home at Roanoke, and had again reached mentally something like a state of stable equilibrium:

“DEAR MARSHALL: On taking out my chariot this morning, for the first time, since I got from your house, to clean it and the harness (for the dreadful weather has frozen us all up until today), the knife was found in the bottom of the carriage, where it must have been dropped from a shallow waist-coat pocket, as I got in at your door, for I missed the knife soon afterwards. When I got home, I had the pockets of the chariot searched, and everything there taken out, and it was not until John had searched strictly into my portmanteau and bag, taking out everything therein, that I became perfectly convinced of what I was before persuaded, that I had left the knife in my chamber in your house on Tuesday the 6th, and, when I heard it had not been seen, I took it for granted that your little yellow boy, having ‘found it,’ had, according to the negro code of morality, appropriated it to himself. In this, it seems I was mistaken, and I ask his pardon as the best amends I can make to him; and, at the same time to relieve you and Mrs. M. from the unpleasant feeling that such a suspicion would occasion, I dispatch this note by a special messenger, although I have a certain conveyance tomorrow. I make no apology to yourself or to Mrs. M. for the frank expression of my suspicion, because *truth* is the Goddess at whose shrine I worship, and no Huguenot in France, or Morisco in Spain, or Judaizing Christian in Portugal ever paid more severely for his heretical schism

<sup>1</sup> June 12, 1796, *The Journal of Latrobe*, 11.

than I have done in leaving the established church of *falsehood* and *grimace*. I am well aware that ladies are as delicate as they are charming creatures, and that, in our intercourse with them, we must strain the truth as far as possible. Brought up from their earliest infancy to disguise their real sentiments (for a woman would be a monster who did not practice this disguise) it is their privilege to be insincere, and we should despise [them] and justly too, if they had that manly frankness and reserve, which constitutes the ornament of our character, as the very reverse does of theirs. We must, therefore, keep this in view in all of our intercourse with them, and recollect that, as our point of honour is courage and frankness, theirs is chastity and dissimulation, for, as I said before, a woman who does not dissemble her real feelings is a monster of impudence. Now, therefore, it does so happen (as Mr. Canning would say) that truth is very offensive to the ears of a lady when to those of a gentleman (her husband for instance) it would be not at all so. To illustrate—Mrs. Randolph of Bizarre, my brother's widow, was beyond all comparison the nicest and best house-wife that I ever saw. Not one drop of water was suffered to stand upon her sideboard, except what was in the pitcher, the house from cellar to garret, and in every part [was] as clean as hands could make it, and everything as it should be to suit even my fastidious taste.

“I lived there after my brother's death from 1796 to 1810, inclusive, and never did I see or *smell* anything to offend my senses or my imagination *but once*. The chamber pots were as sweet and as clean as the tea cups, being constantly washed and sunned, and the necessary was as clean as the parlour, and, except in autumn, I would defy you to find a leaf or a feather in the yard. No poultry were permitted to come into it; and we had no dirty children, white or negro, to make litter and filth. A strong enclosure of *sawn* plank, eight feet high, fenced in the kitchen, smoke-house, ice-house, pigeon house, veal-house, and wood-house, in which the wood for the use of the house was stacked away under lock and key. The turkey and hen houses were in the same enclosure, which had two doors, one next the dwelling house, for the use of the mistress and house servants, and large enough to admit a wagon on the back

or north side; beyond which was a well built quarter, with two brick chimneys and two rooms and four rooms without for servants. There was also what I had forgot, a spinning and weaving house. At night, the doors of this enclosure were locked up, not a servant being allowed to sleep within it, although every one of them was in sound of the lady's bell. On one unhappy day, in a very hot and damp spell of weather of long continuance, a piece of cold lamb was brought to table that was spoiled, the first and last instance in nearly fifteen years of the slightest neglect in household economy. I ordered the waiter to take it away; it being spoiled. Mrs. R. resented this and flatly contradicted me, and, altho' the lamb absolutely *stunk*, she ate a part of it to prove her words true; and was affronted with me almost past forgiveness. I dare say, if I had not noticed the lamb, she might have given a hint to the servant to take it away, but the honest, naked truth was not to be borne. We had no company but Dudley and her younger son, then school boys, and an Englishman named Knowles, who acted as overseer or steward, and dined with us until he took to drink.

"Mrs. R. stoutly denied that the lamb *could* be spoiled, because it had been boiled only the day before and had been in the ice-house ever since. I admitted her facts but denied her *logic, which was truly a woman's*. I maintained that the highest evidence was that of the senses, that we must reason *from* facts, where we could get at them, and it was only where we could not that it was fair to argue from probabilities; that the lamb *stunk*, and, therefore, was not sound. This she denied, and, to prove her words, actually made a shift to swallow half a mouthful, which, under other circumstances, she would not have done for a thousand dollars. So much for the ladies, charming creatures, the salt of the earth, whom, like Uncle Toby and all other old bachelors, I never could thoroughly understand for want of the key of matrimony, which alone can unlock their secrets and make plain (as many a husband can tell) all the apparent contradictions in their character. Yes, so much for the fairer and better part of the creation; as from my soul I believe them to be, but who, as the Waverly man says of kings, are *Kittle Cattle* to shoe behind, and so it ought

to be, for it is their poor and almost only privilege to *kick*, while we roam where we will, and they must sit still until they are asked. I, therefore, am for upholding them in all their own proper privileges, so long as they don't encroach upon those of men. A woman who unsexes herself deserves to be treated and will be treated as a man."<sup>1</sup>

The first entry in the Diary is under date of Sept. 1, 1808, and the last under date of Feb. 15, 1815. It covers a period, therefore, of only some 6½ years. After its last date, the book was used down to the date of Randolph's death merely as a repository for memoranda of the most miscellaneous descriptions relating to almost every conceivable subject of which he desired to preserve a permanent record. Even between 1796 and 1810, Randolph was frequently at Roanoke, where he seems to have made adequate provision for his occasional reception though he was not living there permanently. After 1810, he resided at Roanoke until his death, and, during the whole period, covered by the Diary, his habits were very social, even when he was not engaged in political canvassing. When he resided at Bizarre, one day we find him at Bizarre; the next day he is off to Charlotte Court House and Roanoke, where he entertains his friends William Leigh and William B. Banks; on another day, we find him at a barbecue; on another, at a muster; on another, at an election in Cumberland County, and, on still another, at a fête at Farmville given to him by his friends in honor of his triumphant reelection to Congress. Now, diarizing irregularly, *de die in diem*, he notes that he slept at the Dillons'; or that he breakfasted with his friend Booker, or dined at George Skipwith's, or killed 25 partridges with the aid of Blake Woodson and Theodore Dudley. These are but typical illustrations of his movements, when he resided at Bizarre, gathered at

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Saturday, Dec. 17, 1831, ½ past 12, Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor., Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

random from the first few pages of the Diary. In connection with his oscillations between Washington and Bizarre or Roanoke, the reader has already been apprized of the manner in which the hospitable country seats between Bizarre and Washington sometimes supplied him with a series of easy stepping-stones. How hot he kept his thoroughbred's hoofs, when he was in transit from one point to another, we may imagine after reading this entry in the Diary under date of March 27, 1809: "Left Bizarre at  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths past 6; stopped at Cheshire's and Ça Ira 1 hour and  $\frac{1}{2}$ . Reached New Canton at  $\frac{1}{4}$  past 12. Brunette not at all fatigued. Mon. 27. Rode from court in two hours. Mare looked as full as if she had not been used; appetite or spirits never flagged in the least; she anxious to come faster."

And not only does the Diary show that, when Randolph resided at Bizarre, he was frequently visiting the houses of his friends in the surrounding territory, but that they were often visiting him at Bizarre; and occasionally visitors from remote points would be lodged under its roof. Among the families, with whom he was most intimate, when he lived at Bizarre, were those of his innumerable Randolph kinsfolk south of the James and west of Petersburg; the Johnstons, the Bookers, the Creed Taylors, the Cunninghams, the Dillons, the Woodsons, the Daniels, the Skipwiths, of Hors du Monde, the Carringtons, the Branches, the Mortons, the Robinsons, the Venables, the Heths, the Millers, the Murrays, and the Watkinsons, whose homes, collectively speaking, stretched all the way from the James to the Roanoke. During the period, covered by the Diary, after Randolph left Bizarre, his spirit at Roanoke was not less social than it had been at Bizarre. Over and over again, while he resided at Roanoke, we find him sleeping, breakfasting, or dining under the roofs of many of the leading families of Halifax, Charlotte, Prince Edward, Cumberland, Buckingham,



Amelia, Nottoway, Chesterfield, and Powhatan Counties, in addition to all or most of those just mentioned, such as the Coleses, the Leighs, the Clarks, the Colemans, the Bruces, the Skipwiths, of Prestwoud, the Bouldins, the Reads, the Legrands, the Hubbards, the Wilsons, the Nelsons, the Deanes, the Pembertons, the Scotts, the Farrars, the Tabbs, the Banisters, the Bathurst Randolphs, the Womacks, the Flournoyes, the Mosbys, the Merrys, the Johnsons, the Hardaways, the Harrisons, the Cabells, the Spencers, the Barksdales, the Redfords, the Berkeleys, and the Irbys. The Diary shows also that, during the same period, Randolph so frequently extended the hospitality of his home to his friends and acquaintances, some from communities as remote as North Carolina, that it would be simply an imposition upon the reader to name them, or to say how frequently they crossed his threshold. His 1817, 1818, 1819, and 1824 journals tell the same story of social activity, and so does his 1830 journal, so far as it was kept before he sailed for Russia.

In the course of little more than a week, in October, 1810, he dined with his friends the Deanes on Friday; dined at Captain Pemberton's on Saturday; spent a quiet day at Thomas Miller's on Sunday, and on Monday pushed on to Wm. Scott's, where his friend Major Wm. Scott was very low; and thence, on Tuesday, proceeded to Richmond by the Manakin Town Ferry; and thence, four days later, reversing his course to the Ferry, returned to Roanoke by way of Hors du Monde and Bizarre. With the numerous Carringtons about him, he maintained for many years a commerce of social amenities which was rarely interrupted, and, when in 1813, the two Pauls, as he called the two Paul Carringtons of his day, to signalize their conversion from the damnable doctrine of Federalism to the true Madisonian faith, kindly banished him for a time from Sinope, he still kept up something like an inter-



change of society with some good fellows in Halifax. We use his own words.<sup>1</sup>

In using them, Randolph expressed himself but feebly, because his journal entries make it plain that he thought no more of riding off 15 or 20 miles to dine and play whist with a group of his Halifax County friends, at Wm. Leigh's, or James Bruce's, or one of the Clarks', or Coleses', than an inhabitant of Richmond at the present time would of going a few miles into its suburbs in a motor car to do a similar thing. And very jolly gatherings these must have been, if we may judge by the reluctance with which the individuals, who constituted them, parted company with each other. For instance, on July 9, 1811, after spending the preceding day with Mr. Coleman in Halifax, Randolph went on to one of the Clarks' and spent the day there with Ragland, Isaac H. Coles, and James Bruce; and, on the next day, accompanied by Clark, Coleman, Ragland, Coles, and Bruce, returned to Roanoke where they all dined together, with the addition of one of the Watkinses and William Leigh, who had arrived there during Randolph's absence. Two days later, Randolph goes off with Leigh and Bruce to Bruce's, to dine with Bruce again, and thence, in the evening, to Wm. Leigh's. Nor did the banishment from Sinope continue very long; for few names recur oftener in Randolph's journals than those of the Carringtons.

This was a part of his social itinerary in August, 1817: On Aug. 6, he spent the night at the residence of Dr. Bathurst Randolph, Obsto (I stop you), the very name of which suggests the arresting hand of cordial hospitality; the night of Aug. 7, he slept at D. Meade's; and then, after spending Aug. 8 and 9 in Richmond, on Aug. 10 he came back to Clay Hill, the home of Mrs. Tabb, in time for dinner; whence, after taking dinner, he proceeded to Obsto, where he remained some two weeks in the society

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, July 9, 1813, J. H. Whitty MSS.

of his host and his host's family and of his friends, Dr. Banister and Mrs. Tabb, who resided in the neighborhood and had him to dinner at their houses on different days before he went back to Roanoke. On Sept. 3, he was again in the same hospitable locality and again for two weeks the recipient of the same warm-hearted attentions at the hands of its inhabitants.

"In his house," Randolph said, in a letter to his niece after the death of Dr. Bathurst Randolph, "I spent many weeks in succession every year and never felt less at home than in my own. Indeed, the warmth and cordiality of the attentions I received from every member of the family rendered my time as agreeable as it could be made."<sup>1</sup>

In July, 1810, he went all the way to Warrenton, North Carolina, spending a night at Prestwould both going and returning, and receiving many social attentions, while in North Carolina; but, being so unfortunate on his return, when he was almost in sight of his home, as to have his chair shafts broken, when he was crossing the Little Roanoke, and to get a good ducking. In North Carolina, he attended the wedding of his friend, Governor James Turner, (a) and also a barbecue at Richard Bullock's.<sup>2</sup> On another occasion in September, 1818, when his mind was fermenting with religious enthusiasm, he went on an excursion as far as the home of one of the Prestons, in Botetourt County, Va., ascending the Peaks of Otter on his way, and writing to Dr. Brockenbrough after his return to Roanoke: "I was on the top of the pinnacle of Otter this day fortnight; a little above the earth, but how far beneath Heaven."<sup>3</sup> On a second visit in October, 1818, to the same region, he stopped long enough at Red Hill, the former home of Patrick Henry, to refresh his admiration for a statesman and orator, whose wisdom and

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, July 29, 1821, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 2, 103.

eloquence were ever among his favorite topics of conversation.<sup>1</sup>

In the summer of 1801, Randolph visited one of the "Springs" in the Virginia mountains with a party of ladies.<sup>2</sup> In June, 1813, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough from Roanoke that, if he went to any watering place, it would be to the Virginia Hot Springs, but this, he said, was to be merely for the purpose of stewing the rheumatism out of his carcass.<sup>3</sup> Other occasions, when he wandered off his beaten social paths, might be mentioned; as when he repaired several times to Nottoway County to see his intimate friend Edmund Irby, or some other friend.<sup>4</sup> Once, after remaining for some days at his favorite places of resort, Obsto and Clay Hill, he kept on as far past Petersburg as Claremont, the famous plantation on the James River of Col. Wm. Allen.<sup>5</sup> (a)

To Richmond Randolph was frequently taken by the desire for social diversion, and he had numerous friends and acquaintances there. In 1813, after his defeat at the polls, he visited that place, and remained in it, under the roof of Dr. Brockenbrough, for six months; with the exception of the time consumed in two excursions to Ellerslie. Of this visit, the Diary contains the following memorandum:

"1813 to 1814, from Nov. 1813 until May 9, 1814, I remained in and about Richmond with my good friends Brockenbrough; most hospitably entertained by them and by the inhabitants; frequently dining with the Ch. Justice, Mr. Wickham, R. Gamble, Major Gibbon, Mr. Hancock, Mr. T. Taylor, P. Haxall, Mr. E. Cunningham, Porter, Barksdale, I. G. Smith, Adam Murray, and staying all night with the last

<sup>1</sup> *Journal*, Oct. 18, 1818, *Va. Hist. Soc.*, & Bouldin, 173.

<sup>2</sup> J. R. to Creed Taylor, July 25, 1801, *Creed Taylor Papers*.

<sup>3</sup> June 2, 1813, Garland, v. 2, 14.

<sup>4</sup> 1819, *Journal*, May 10, *Va. Hist. Soc.*; 1817, *Journal*, Sept. 17, *Va. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>5</sup> 1817, *Journal*, Sept. 22, *Va. Hist. Soc.*

three; also entertained by Rutherford, John Gamble, T. Wilson, I. Ambler, N. Nicholas, W. C. Williams, Pickett, Dr. McLurg.

"I had the pleasure also, during this winter, to form an acquaintance with Mr. and Mrs. Bell, at whose house I passed many delightful hours. Here I became [ ] with Mr. Devereaux, Miss Barton, Mr. and Mrs. Haxall, Mr. and Mrs. McMurdo. At the Ch. Justice's, I was introduced to Mr. Gaston on his return from Congress. I also saw during the winter L. W. Tazewell, Fenton Mercer, Alfred Powell; Wm. Meade in May."<sup>1</sup>

In April, 1830, he attended the races at Richmond, and, on the first day of the succeeding month, he attended a barbecue at Richmond too.<sup>2</sup>

With the leading gentlemen of Maryland Randolph was hardly less familiar than with those of Virginia. In 1804, he wrote to Nicholson that he might pay him a visit at Chesterfield, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, not to view his country, desirable as it was, but to see and converse with those in whose society he had passed some of the least unpleasant moments of his life. Realizing that such qualified language would hardly satisfy the just expectations of an Eastern Shoreman, he added: "It is a strange expression but I could not find one more appropriate."<sup>3</sup> He was the guest of his friend, Charles Sterrett Ridgely, at the latter's country seat, Oaklands, in Howard County, Md., almost as frequently as he was the guest of his friend, Wm. R. Johnson, at his country seat, Oakland, near Petersburg.<sup>4</sup> In a letter to Nicholson, he tells him that he has just dined with his friends, Francis Scott Key and Stanford, of North Carolina, and Mr. and Mrs. Calvert at Blenheim, the country seat in Maryland of Mr. R. Lowndes, after having made a short excursion to see Mr. George Calvert's famous paintings and flowers.<sup>5</sup> On

<sup>1</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>2</sup> 1830, *Journal*, April 28, 29, and May 1, *Va. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>3</sup> Bizarre, Aug. 27, 1804, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>4</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>5</sup> Apr. 17, 1810, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

another occasion, one of his journals records the fact that he had just dined with Mr. George Calvert himself.<sup>1</sup>

With the aid of the Diary, we can trace at least one visit that he made to Wye, the celebrated country seat of the Lloyds, in Talbot County, Md. In connection with this visit, the Diary contains brief references to Lloyd Tilghman, of Tilghman's Point, Robert Tilghman, of Perry Hall, John Tilghman, of Bennett's Point, Wm. G. Tilghman, Robert Goldsborough, of Miles River, and the Haddaways. About the same time, he spent an evening at Mrs. Lloyd's at Annapolis; dined with Mr. Oden at the Woodyard, and visited Philip Steuart. A Marylander, at any rate, would be at no loss to know who these friends and acquaintances of Randolph were. Other Marylanders, who are brought to our attention by Randolph's journals and letters, are: Robert Oliver, one of the wealthiest and most conspicuous Baltimoreans of his time, over whose fine claret Randolph smacks his lips in the Diary; General Winder, Dr. William Gibson, Jonathan Meredith, Robert Gilmor, James Sterrett, and Mr. Cheston.

Randolph was also well known to the society of Philadelphia. When Theodore Dudley was studying medicine in that City, he wrote to him that it would give him great pleasure to renew his old acquaintance in Philadelphia and to form a new one with a few of its worthy inhabitants.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, in his desire to give Theodore Dudley a liberal education in every sense of the word, he did not spare Virginia.

"I am much obliged to you for your description of the country around (or rather on this side of) Dowingtown," he said in another letter to Dudley. "Such accounts of the places, persons, etc., you may see are very acceptable because they indicate a spirit of observation. There are many who *look* and do not *see*, while some *see* without *looking*. Indolence

<sup>1</sup> May 2, 1824, *Va. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Aug. 4, 1811, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 96.

and indifference, the *maladie du pays* (of Virginia), are more injurious to the eye-sight than candle light and the smallest print."<sup>1</sup>

In the same letter he also says:

"I highly approve of your pedestrian essays; but choose not *Virginians* for your companions. I have no doubt that many of the medical students of the South leave Philadelphia as ignorant of everything worthy to be known in that City as when they entered it. This arises from a clannish spirit which makes them associate exclusively with one another, and foster their ridiculous prejudices against the People of the Middle and North States, of whom in fact they know nothing."<sup>2</sup>

He had some close friends at Philadelphia, to whom we shall refer later; and, when he hobbled to that City in 1814, after leaving Morrisania, and suffering an injury to his kneecap in the accident which befell him in New York, he rested there for some little time, and was the recipient of no little attention at the hands of some of its people.

North of Philadelphia, Randolph seems to have had no friends except among such individuals as had been brought into intercourse with him at Washington in one way or another.

Of Yankees he spoke at times even more impatiently than he did of Virginians in his letter to Theodore Dudley. A memorandum in the Diary mentions the fact that Captain Bridger of the Schooner *Sally* of Marblehead, which was met by the *Concord* on its way to Cronstadt, refused to accept anything but a little pork, whiskey, and new potatoes for 600 or 700 pounds of fine fish. "Pretty well for a Yankee," notes Randolph. On another occasion, in an endorsement on a letter written to him by his friend Mark Alexander, in 1822, he terms a certain sailing-

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Aug. 12, 1811, *Id.*, 97.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

master in the United States Navy "a dirty mean Yankee with a Vermontese savage for his mate."<sup>1</sup>

In describing the manner in which Randolph detected the error in Giles' quotation from Sallust *memoriter*, Dr. Lacy says that he exclaimed: "Now hand me the edition I want; *in usum Delphini* mind you. I'll have nothing to do with your Yankee contrivances with English notes. Mr. Lacy, did you ever see a Yankee who knew anything about the classics?"<sup>2</sup> (a)

But these were but the shallow and unreflecting utterances of an intense, outspoken nature which was as lavish as such natures generally are in the use of the acute accent. Before the Civil War, there were reasons enough, founded upon diversities of interest and clashes of honest conviction, why a Virginian, like Randolph, and a New Englander should have cherished unfriendly feelings towards each other which easily passed into gross misconception and misrepresentation; but there never was a time when close contact between a Virginian and a New Englander did not more or less dissipate the senseless prejudices and prepossessions which they entertained about each other personally, and which have now so far faded out that, to give expression to them, should be regarded as denoting not only provincial narrowness and a lack of genuine patriotism but very bad manners besides. The letters of Senator Mills show how much pleasure Randolph found in the society of New Englanders at Washington; and nothing could evidence better than the musical lines of Whittier on Randolph how much Randolph had in common with the culture of New England.

Not only did he pay frequent visits to his friends and acquaintances, when he was at Roanoke or elsewhere, but, after reading his journals, it is hard to understand how he

<sup>1</sup> March 12, 1822, Geo. P. Coleman MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Early Recollections of J. R.*, by Wm. S. Lacy, *Union Seminary Mag.* (1893-4), v. 5, pp. 1-10.



could have deemed himself a Robinson Crusoe when at Roanoke. In holding himself up in that character, he was simply indulging his propensity for intensive speech or giving tongue to the restlessness and discontent of an uncommonly active spirit, which craved strong excitements, and of a body too diseased not to yield freely at times to peevish impulses. Roanoke was but a bachelor home, and yet, in reading Randolph's letters and journals, it seems to us that it was not an unworthy exponent of the social virtues and traditions of a Virginia home of his time. Almost every day, when he was there, some relation or friend of his was arriving at, or leaving it. Now it was Randolph's nephews—Tudor and St. George—or Peyton Randolph, or some other Randolph who came to shoot or to enjoy some other form of recreation; and now it was William Leigh on his peripatetic round of the county-seats at which he practiced law so zealously that Randolph speaks on one occasion of his looking badly and over-worked; and now it was William B. Banks bent on some similar errand to Charlotte Court House or elsewhere; and now it was James Bruce or General Edward Carrington, of Berry Hill, or Col. Carrington, or Col. Clark, or some other rapidly promoted colonel of the time, on a purely social visit; or, perhaps it was Randolph's half-brother, Henry St. George Tucker, or some devoted friend of his like Dr. Brockenbrough, or Edmund Irby, or Barksdale; or, perhaps, it was Dr. Hoge, whose character and eloquence he so much admired. These names give but an inadequate idea of the number of guests who, from time to time, dined with him, formally or otherwise, or slept under his roof during the periods covered by his journals. One entry in the Diary, under date of Sept. 10, 1810, is: "Bouldin, Leigh, Banks; frolic at Roanoke."

On another occasion, some 10 guests sat down with him to meat at his table at Roanoke. At Washington, he enjoyed in full measure the social pleasures which a thinly



peopled country like that around Roanoke could only partially supply. With some prominent residents of the District, such as the Keys and the Tayloes, he was on terms of heart-felt intimacy; and, in addition to being the life of every Congressional mess, of which he was ever a member, he frequently gave and received invitations to dinner, and was not infrequently seen at private routs or assemblies. Among the persons shown by his journals to have dined with him, as his guests at Washington, were Francis Scott Key, Gallatin, Calhoun, Poinsett, Van Buren, and Chief Justice Marshall. The relations between Albert Gallatin and himself became involved for a time in the general estrangement caused by his defection from the Jefferson administration, but in the year 1824 the two were on friendly terms again. "Couldn't dine with General Jackson"; "Couldn't dine with Patroon (Van Rensaeller)," are among the entries in his journal for March, 1824.<sup>1</sup> He must have been very fond of dinners to have burdened his pen, when diarizing about them, with declinations as well as acceptances.

Among his dinner hosts in 1817 were Rufus King and Chief Justice Marshall. Among the parties that he attended in 1817 were Mrs. Bagot's and De. Neuville's.<sup>2</sup> (a)

In Randolph's letters, there are some quite full references to social events of his day at Washington. Here, for instance, is his description of a dinner given by Wm. H. Crawford, when Secretary of the Treasury:

"I dined yesterday with the S. of the T. and, although as far as I was concerned, the party was a very pleasant one, I can conceive of nothing in the general more insipid than these ministerial dinners. You are invited at 5; the usage is to be there 15 or 20 minutes after the time; dinner never served until 6; and a little after 7 coffee closes the entertainment without the least opportunity for conversation. *Quant à moi*, I was placed at his S——ship's left hand, and he did me the honor

<sup>1</sup> *Va. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

to address his conversation almost exclusively to me. Now you know that, as 'attentions' constitute the great charm of manners, so are they more peculiarly acceptable to them that are least accustomed to them, such as antiquated belles, discarded statesmen, and bankrupts of all sorts—whether in person or in character."<sup>1</sup>

And the very next paragraph in this letter is a good reminder of the danger of relying upon Randolph's repining about his own solitariness, whether at Roanoke or Washington: "Nothing can be more dreary than the life we lead here. 'Tis something like being on board ship, but not so various. We stupidly doze over our sea-coal fires in our respective messes, and may truly be said to hibernate at Washington."<sup>2</sup>

More vapid than the ministerial dinner given by Crawford was another dinner given by himself; possibly because his own expectations had been a little too roseate; seeing that he had written two days before to Dr. Brockenbrough that he was to have good company at least, if not a good dinner. When the occasion had passed, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough:

"Mr. Chief Justice, Tazewell, Van Buren, Benton, Morgan of N. Y., and George Calvert dined with me yesterday (Mr. King was sick, of his late freak in the Senate, I shrewdly suspect); and your 'fat sall-ion party' was hardly more dull than we were. The Chief Justice has no longer the power '*d'être vif*.' Tazewell took to prosing at the far end of the table to two or three, who formed a sort of separate coterie; V. B. was unwell, and out of spirits; and I was obliged to get nearly or quite drunk, to keep them from yawning outright."<sup>3</sup>

Rufus King had accepted an invitation but had been prevented by sickness from attending.

Randolph himself had to be very sick not to keep a

<sup>1</sup> To Dr. Brockenbrough, Nov. 26, 1820, Garland, v. 2, 138.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 2, 213.

dinner engagement and not to be the sprightliest member of the company. In a letter to Theodore Dudley he thus described the equivocal drink which piqued public curiosity so keenly: "My drink," he says, "is toast and water made by boiling the latter and pouring it on highly toasted bread, so that it acquires the color of Cognac brandy."<sup>1</sup> And the same letter indicates that he was in the habit of carrying a bottle of this thin potation with him to dinner parties when his health was at a low ebb.

"Yesterday," he said, "I dined out with the Speaker. I would not have gone for any other 'dignitary' here. I made Johnny carry my cloth shoes, and a bottle of toast and water. The color deceived the company, except one or two near me, whom I was obliged to let into the secret, to preserve my monopoly. Notwithstanding all this, I am persuaded that I was the liveliest man in the whole company; and, like Falstaff, was not only merry myself, but the cause of mirth in others. Mr. Secretary C., I think, will remember, for some time, some of my rejoinders to him, half joke, and three parts earnest, (as Paddy says) on the subject of the constitutional powers of Congress, and some other matters of minor note—although he tried to turn them off with great good humor. To say the truth, I have a sneaking liking for C. for 'by-gone's' sake; and, if he had let alone being a great man, should have 'liked him hugely,' as Squire Western hath it."<sup>2</sup>

How little Randolph allowed his desire for social amusement to be influenced by his ill-health is also inferable from other facts stated in this letter. Mentioning a pleasant dinner at Georgetown, he said:

"You may remember how bitter cold it was on Thursday. The change took place about midnight of Tuesday. I slept the forepart of it with my window hoisted, and rose about two o'clock on Wednesday morning and shut it down. Well!

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Jan. 27, 1822, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 240.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 241.

I rode from Georgetown home, after ten o'clock, without suffering, in the least, from the cold except a little in the fingers. This was neither owing to the warmth infused by Mr. O.'s very fine old Madeira, nor by his daughter's beauty and accomplishments; although either, I believe, would have kept up the excitement for a longer time than it took Wildfire 'to glance' along 'the Avenue.' But, superadded to the influence of wine, and beauty, and music, and good company, I had a leathern '*justicore*' as old Edie would call it, (*Juste-au-corps*), under my waistcoat—which I recommend to all who desire to guard against our piercing winds—and cloth shoes over my boots. My horsemanship was, indeed, put into requisition, on meeting a rattling hackney coach, with lights, driving at a furious rate. It was where 'the Avenue' is crossed by a gutter and impeded by ice. Nevertheless, I did what Cumbey could not do with his wretched curb-bridle—and, as Simon [his groom] says, 'I *consequenced* her with a *snapper*.' My disease which had been very troublesome for some days, and particularly that morning, and which I had checked 'for the nonce' with absorbents, recurred with ten-fold violence in the night."<sup>1</sup>

One of the winning features of Randolph's character was his grateful sensibility to kindness or friendly sympathy in every form. Writing to Theodore Dudley during his desperate illness in 1817, he said:

"Mrs. John M., Mrs. B., and Mrs. F. K., have been very kind in sending me jellies, lemons, &c. &c. Thomas M. N. has been extremely attentive and obliging. Mr. K., of New York, Mr. Chief Justice, Mr. H., of Maryland, Mr. M., of South Carolina, Mr. B., of Georgetown, (I need not name F. K. M. (no longer Abbé) C. de S., and D) have been very kind in their attentions. Mr. M. sent me some *old*, choice Madeira, and his man-cook to dress my rice; (a mystery not understood any where on this side of Cape Fear river); sending, also, the rice, to be dressed; and Mr. Chief Justice came to assist me in drawing up my will, which I had strangely and criminally

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

neglected for sometime past, and of which neglect I was more strangely admonished in a dream."<sup>1</sup>

Randolph's eager zest for human society also assumed the form of numerous letters to his friends and acquaintances. "Recollect, my son," he wrote to Theodore Dudley in 1812, "that I have some 20 or 30 correspondents; you perhaps not more than 3 or 4."<sup>2</sup> Some of these correspondents, however, were business correspondents. "I have about 30 letters to answer besides the daily addition to my epistolary debt," he wrote to Joseph Nicholson in the preceding year. "Three of them are from Harry Tucker."<sup>3</sup> At a later period of his life, when his strength was fast failing him, he speaks of having a hundred unanswered letters on his hands.<sup>4</sup> Except when a helpless invalid, he wrote letters with the ready facility of a quick-witted and sympathetic woman who writes without regard to anything but the sheer desire to open up her heart or soul to a child or friend. It is to be regretted that he never kept any copies of his charming letters; a strong indication of their unstudied nature, and it is still more to be regretted that so many of them should have been deliberately destroyed from considerations of delicacy or good feeling, which, however admirable, when well judged, amounted in the old Virginia life to little less than a destructive superstition. (a)

By Philip A. Bruce in his brief but very suggestive little essay on Randolph the latter is pronounced the most brilliant man ever produced by Virginia, and, perhaps, the most brilliant letter-writer of whom the Old South can boast.<sup>5</sup> We shall not stop to express an opinion upon the first of these two judgments, but the second we should modify by making it broad enough to cover the whole

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 23, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 195.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 5, 1812, *Id.*, 115.

<sup>3</sup> Georgetown, Jan. 28, 1811, Bryan MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Letter to Nathan Loughborough, Jan. 23, 1832, Loughborough MSS.

<sup>5</sup> *Libr. of Southern Lit.*, v. 10, 4334.

United States; certainly so far as American public men are concerned. In our opinion, the only distinguished men in the political history of the United States who can be placed in the same class with Randolph as a brilliant letter-writer are Benjamin Franklin and William Wirt; two men who differed from each other *toto cælo*, except that both had lovable natures and wrote sparkling letters. Indeed, we do not hesitate to say that Randolph in his own way is entitled to be included in the same category with Gray, Horace Walpole, Gibbon, Cowper, Byron, and Fitzgerald as one of the real masters of epistolary composition. Most of the thousands of letters which he wrote have been destroyed or lost; but enough remain to make us ask sometimes why it was that he never tried his hand at some purely literary task. We have his own word for it that he never "made a verse in his life,"<sup>1</sup> and we are also informed by him that all of his early literary efforts of every sort, whatever they were, went up in flame and smoke when Bizarre was consumed by fire.<sup>2</sup> The only evidence that we have that he ever thought of engaging seriously in literary work is found in a letter from him to Francis Scott Key, written before his return to Congress in 1815, in which he said: "I do think a review on the plan you mention would be highly beneficial, and, if I was fit for anything, I should like to engage in a work of the sort; but 14 years of Congressional life have rendered me good for nothing."<sup>3</sup> The same thought is presented more positively in a subsequent letter to Key in which he said:

"As to the review, I am out of the question on that and every other subject requiring any species of exertion. I said truly when I told you that Congressional life had destroyed me. *Fruges consumere*; this is all that I am fit for; and such is my infirmity of body that I make a very poor hand even at that,

<sup>1</sup> Letter to F. W. Gilmer, *Century Mag.*, 1895-6, v. 29, 714.

<sup>2</sup> *Garl.*, v. 1, 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Garland*, v. 2, 34.

notwithstanding I am one of those who (as the French say) *Sont nés pour la digestion.*"<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately, the reason that Randolph gave for his lethargy as a potential man of letters is applicable, with or without modification, to almost every Southern man of his time who might have achieved literary distinction but for the abnormal importance that the peculiar structure of Southern society gave to public eloquence. So fraught with vital issues to the South was the long sectional controversy that a Southerner of commanding talents had little choice, while it lasted, but to say with Randolph: "As Calanthe died dancing, so must I die speaking."

Randolph was fond of travel and quick to avail himself of all the amusement and social enjoyments that it affords. Nor can there be any doubt that, whenever he was abroad, his conversational talents and distinguished presence won a most cordial reception for him. He visited Europe in 1822, 1824, 1826, and 1830, and we cannot but regret that the only Journals that he ever kept while he was abroad—those of 1824 and 1830—are too fragmentary and meagre to be of any real value.

Of his intercourse with conspicuous individuals in Great Britain, we have some details, in addition to what we have already laid before the reader. One of the things, by which he was most impressed, when he was in England in 1822, was the great influence exerted by the eloquence of Elizabeth Fry over fallen women.

"I have seen them weep repentant tears while she addressed them," he once said to the father of Jacob Harvey. "I have heard their groans of despair, Sir. Nothing but *religion* can effect this *miracle*, Sir, for what *can* be a greater *miracle* than the conversion of a degraded, sinful woman taken from the very dregs of society!"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Richm., May 7, 1814, Garland, v. 2, 35.    <sup>2</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 402.



Nor without interest is the account given by the daughter of Elizabeth Fry to Harvey of the manner in which her mother first became acquainted with Randolph.

"One day," she said, "my mother was in town getting ready to go to Newgate when a stranger was announced. A tall, thin gentleman, with long hair, and very strangely dressed, entered the parlor, walked deliberately up to my mother, who rose to receive him, and held out his hand, saying in the sweet tone of a lady's voice: 'I feel that I have some right to introduce myself to Elizabeth Fry, as I am the friend of her friend, Jessy Kersey, of Philadelphia, (a celebrated preacher in the Society of Friends). I am John Randolph of Roanoke, State of Virginia; the fellow-countryman of Washington.' My mother, who had heard a great deal of him from different persons, gave him a cordial reception, and was so extremely pleased with his most original conversation [that] she not only took him with her to Newgate, but invited him to come and see us. We have since seen him several times and have been highly delighted with him. Last week, some strangers were to dine with us and my mother invited him to be of the number. In writing the note of invitation, I apologized to him for naming so unfashionably early an hour as *four o'clock*, knowing that at the *West End* he never dined before 8. His reply was very characteristic and made us laugh heartily. Here it is: 'Mr. Randolph regrets that a prior engagement will deprive him of the pleasure of dining with Mrs. Fry on Thursday night. No apology, however, was necessary for the *early* hour named in her note as it is *two hours later* than Mr. R. is accustomed to dine in Virginia; and he has not yet been long enough in London to learn how to turn *day into night* and *vice versa*.'"

We are also told by Harvey that the impression made by Randolph upon Lord L. (Limerick?) was equally agreeable, and that, after meeting Randolph for the first time one night under the gallery of the House of Commons, his Lordship, in conversation with Harvey, gave expression to his feelings in these glowing terms:

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 402.



“I have never met with a so thoroughly well informed gentleman as your friend Randolph; no matter what the subject—history, *belles-lettres*, biography; but, Sir, the most astonishing part of all is that he possesses a minute local knowledge of England and Ireland. I thought that *I* knew them well, but I assure you I was obliged to yield the palm to him. I have purposely tried to puzzle or confuse him but all in vain. His conversational powers are most dazzling even in London, Sir, where we pride ourselves on good talkers.”<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, his Lordship was so much pleased with Randolph that he solicited the permission of the Lord Chancellor to introduce him as a distinguished American into the House of Lords by the private entrance near the throne instead of leaving him to force his way with the crowd through the common entrance. The permission was given, and Lord L. introduced Randolph to the door-keeper of the House of Lords, and asked him to admit him whenever he presented himself, without requiring him to exhibit any special order. In doing so, he remarked that Randolph's figure and whole appearance were so singular that the door-keeper would run no risk of having any counterfeit Randolphs imposed upon him. The license, sweeping as it was, stood successfully the test even of a great debate on the Roman Catholic Peers Bill. Harvey endeavored to persuade Randolph that it would not avail on such an extraordinary occasion as that, and begged him to make use of a special order of admission which he had obtained from the Marquis of L.; but Randolph replied:

“What, Sir! do you suppose *I* would consent to struggle with, and push through, the crowd of persons who for two long hours must fight their way in at the *lower* door. Oh, no, Sir! I shall do no such a thing, and, if I cannot enter as a *gentleman commoner*, I go not at all!”

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. i, 403.

Afterwards, when Harvey had finally squeezed himself into the chamber by the lower door, half suffocated, and had been fortunate enough to secure standing room at the bar, whom should he see but Randolph walking in through the private entrance to the chamber, in company with Canning, Lord Castlereagh, Sir Robert Peel, and many other celebrated members of the House of Commons; and he observed that some of Randolph's companions even selected for him a prominent position where he could see and hear perfectly, and made him the object of many courtesies during the course of the night.<sup>1</sup>

Harvey has also reported for us some amusing observations made by Randolph upon a splendid ball which he attended in London, and which was given under the immediate patronage of George IV—once termed by Randolph "The English Vitellius—" and the principal nobility of his kingdom for the benefit of the poor Irish peasantry of Munster and Connaught, who were suffering at the time from famine and disease:

"It was cheap, Sir, very cheap!" Randolph said to Harvey. "Actors and actresses innumerable, and all dressed out most gorgeously. There were jewels enough, Sir, there to make new crowns for all the monarchs of Europe! and I, too, *Republican* though I am, must needs go in a court dress! Well Sir, don't imagine that I was so foolish as to *purchase* a new suit at a cost of 25 or 30 guineas. Oh, no. I have not studied London life for nothing! I had been told, Sir, that many a noble lady would appear at the ball that night with jewels *hired* for the occasion, and I took the hint, Sir, and *hired* a full court dress for 5 guineas. When I beheld myself in the glass, I laughed at the oddity of my appearance, and congratulated myself that I was 3,000 miles from the Charlotte Court House. Had I played the harlequin *there*, Sir, I think my next election would be doubtful. I stole into the room with rather a nervous walk, and was about selecting a very quiet position in a corner, when your countryman, Lord Castlereagh, seeing my em-

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 403.

barrassment came forward and, with an air of the most finished politeness, insisted upon being my chaperon. For one hour, Sir, he devoted himself to me and pointed out all persons of notoriety in the crowd as they passed us in review. Such was the fascination of his manners, I forgot for the moment that I was speaking to the man who had sold his country's independence *and his own*; who had lent his aid to a licentious monarch to destroy his queen, who, if guilty, might point to her husband's conduct as the cause of her fall. But, Sir, I was spell-bound for that hour; for never did I meet a more accomplished gentleman, and yet he is a deceitful politician whose *character* none can admire. An *Irish* Tory, Sir, I never could abide."<sup>1</sup>

Harvey also reports a distinguished Irish member of Parliament as recalling a conversation between Randolph and Maria Edgeworth at his table in these words:

"Spark produced spark, and, for three hours, they kept up the fire until it ended in a perfect blaze of wit, humor and repartee. It appeared to me that Mr. Randolph was more intimately acquainted with Miss Edgeworth's works than she was herself. He frequently quoted passages where her memory was at fault; and he brought forward every character of any note in all her productions. But what most astonished us was his intimate knowledge of Ireland. Lady T. and myself did nothing but listen and I was really vexed when some public business called me away."<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Moore was likewise among the famous persons whom Randolph met in England.

"Whom do you think I met under the gallery of the House of Commons?" Randolph asked of Harvey. "You can't guess and so I'll tell you. There was a spruce, dapper little gentleman sitting next me, and he made some trifling remark, to which I replied. We thus entered into conversation, and I found him a most fascinating, witty fellow. He pointed out to me the distinguished members who were unknown to me,

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

and frequently gave them a friendly shot. At parting, he handed me his card, and I read with some surprise, 'Mr. Thomas Moore.' Yes, sir, it *was* the 'Bard of Erin'; and, upon this discovery, I said to him: 'Well, Mr. Moore, I am delighted to meet you thus, and I tell you, Sir, that I envy you more for being the author of the 'Two-penny Post Bag' and 'Tom Crib's Memorial to Congress,' than for *all* your beautiful songs which play the fool with young ladies' hearts.' He laughed heartily at what he called 'my singular taste,' and we parted the best friends imaginable."<sup>1</sup>

It is profitable to compare this description of Moore with the description that Moore himself gives of Randolph in his journal under date of April 30, 1822.

"Laid in some cold meat, and went to the House of Commons; avenues all blocked up with unsuccessful candidates for admission. After several repulses, and at last giving it up in despair, was taken in by Jerningham as one of the Catholics on his list, Mr. Blunt, sat next Lord Limerick and Randolph, the famous American orator; a singular-looking man with a young-old face, and a short, small body, mounted upon a pair of high crane legs and thighs, so that, when he stood up, you did not know when he was to end, and a squeaking voice like a boy's just before breaking into manhood. His manner too strange and pedantic, but his powers of eloquence (Irving [Washington Irving] tells me) wonderful."<sup>2</sup>

A letter from Randolph to Dr. Brockenbrough mentions the fact that Robert Southey was another poet whom he had met in England in 1822. Writing to this friend from Roanoke, he says in a postscript:

"In sheer distress what to do with myself, I yesterday read *Don Juan*—the 3, 4 and 5 cantos for the first time—fact I assure you. It is diabolically good, the ablest I am inclined to think of all his performances. I now fully comprehend the

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs, &c., of Thos. Moore*, ed. by Lord John Russell, N. Y., v. 1, 415.

case of the *odium plus quam theologicum* of the Lake School toward this wayward genius. I am not sorry that I had not read the whole when I was in Southey's company. I could not have conversed so unreservedly as I did on the subject of Bryon's writings."<sup>1</sup>

Altogether, Randolph achieved a distinct measure of social success in England. Upon that point, we need not go further than Washington Irving, who was in London in 1822:

"John Randolph," he wrote to Henry Brevoort, "is here and has attracted much attention. He has been sought after by people of the first distinction. I have met him repeatedly in company and his eccentricity of appearance and manner make him the more current and interesting; for, in high life here, they are always eager after anything strange and peculiar. There is a vast deal too of the old school in Randolph's manner, the turn of his thoughts and the style of his conversation, which seems to please very much."<sup>2</sup>

One of the results of Randolph's visit to England in 1822 was that, after his return to the United States, he received more than one English publication on the subject of slavery. Mentioning these publications in a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, he says: "They are from Wilberforce, T. Clarkson, Adam Hodgson, and a larger pamphlet entitled 'Negro Slavery as it Exists in the U. S. and the West Indies, especially Jamaica'; that being held up as the negro paradise by the W. I. body in England." They had, he further said, awakened him more than ever to the momentous question of slavery.<sup>3</sup>

There are no salient particulars to be added to what we have told the reader about Randolph's visits to England in 1824 and 1826; but there are some additional circumstances worthy of mention in connection with his visit to

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 193.

<sup>2</sup> London, June 11, 1822, *Life, &c.*, v. 2, 81.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 2, 193.

England in 1830. The following extracts from a letter which he wrote from London to Nathaniel Macon, addressing him as "His old and dear friend," give us some idea of his movements in England in that year when he was not too sick to move about at all:

"Last month, I spent about three weeks in the country. I passed eight days most pleasantly, health excepted, at Bidleston in Suffolk on the invitation of Rich'd Wilson, Esq. He has been the architect of his own fortune, of which about 3,000 acres lie around his spacious and most hospitable mansion. One of his daughters is married to a namesake and distant, very distant, relative of mine, son of the late Bishop (but one) of London. The coach took me within 10 miles of his house, where his own carriage met me. He insisted upon paying me this very unusual compliment, and, when I arrived at Sudbury, I found his coach and servants waiting for me in the Inn Yard. We coursed and killed hares—the dogs never letting one escape. This you (who know the English hare to be nearly or quite as large as our grey fox and much fleeter) will say was fine sport. We shot also—that is Mr. Wilson did—every day, and I sat upon a delightful pony and looked on. Once I made out to pull a trigger and killed four pheasants. Eighteen and a half brace were driven out of one preserve, of about a circular acre, towards us, nearly all within shot, but I did not shoot that day. One morning we killed with the 'long dogs' six hares. On no occasion, did they run as many hundred yards from where we started them; but doubled and twisted, poor things, until the grey hounds *doubled* them up. On Sunday, the last of the month (October), I accompanied my host to New Market to be present at the Houghton meeting. . . .

"Mr. Wilson being called home by the sudden death of a guest, Capt. Rotheram, Capt. of the *Royal Sovereign*, Adm'l Collingwood, the leading and victorious ship at Trafalgar, I, who had been dreadfully sick at New Market, went on the next day to Cambridge. Here I had to go to bed before dinner, and was so ill that I despaired of seeing the vast improvements that have been made since my last visit there. However, my best friend *opium* brought me through. The additions to Trinity

College, St. John's, King's, and Corpus would alone furnish forth an University. That to St. John's is the most beautiful Court in the world, containing 112 apartments of 3 rooms each, and a screen as beautiful, which forms a magnificent cloister."

"Thursday, Dec'r. 9th, 1830.

"(The severest attack which I have had for a long time, obliged me to give over writing yesterday. The distress and anxiety of the last 18 hours are not to be described.)

"The new court, called 'The King's Court,' at Trinity College, is even more extensive than that at St. John's. I dined with the Fellows on the 5th of Nov'r, a Festival, (Gunpowder Plot), in their noble hall, where 400 of that College alone sat down to eight long tables. This vast room, with its old carved rafters, (it has no ceiling, like Westminster Hall, &c.) was warmed by one vast Brazier in the centre of living charcoal. We had a Turbot as large as a Tea-board, and the 'audit ale' restored my appetite for malt liquor, which the infernal drench of London, miscalled Porter, had completely taken away. The whole revenue of this most renowned College, which boasts her Trinity of great men, Bacon, Barrow and Newton (to whom may be added Lord Coke, Dryden, Bentley and Ld. Byron) does not exceed £40,000 per ann. The undergraduates, indeed, contribute largely (not less than £200 each), particularly the Fellow Commoners, sons of such noble-men or gentlemen as are admitted to the Fellows' table. Undergraduates are what we would call students. The mastership of Trinity is worth £3,000 per ann., besides a splendid Lodge (palace), in which the King and the Judges take up their quarters, when they come to Cambridge. The fellowships are moderately endowed, and there is no avoid-able idleness here. With all my prepossessions and prejudices against a foreign education, if I had a son, he should, at mature age, spend at least two years at Trinity College, Cambridge. The united grounds of this College, St. John's, Clare Hall and King's form a promenade to which there is nothing [equal] at Oxford. The celebrated mathematician, Babbage, has written s strange work on the '*Decline of Science in England*'—strange



at least for him, who is the successor of Newton and the only Professor at Cambridge who does not lecture.

“After a short stay in town, I went to Chislehurst, in Kent, to see my venerable friend, Mrs. Weddell, who, with her husband (member for Yorkshire), accompanied Ld. Rockingham in his triumphal procession down to York, after the Repeal of the Stamp Act, which pacified the Empire. She was sister-in-law of Lord R. I spent three days and a half in Kent, one day and night at Mr. Thos. Brandram’s, at Lee, who has the most desirable place that I know in England. . . .

“If I live, I will be at home on the feast of the new corn; for I perceive that we are not to have any old corn even to bring in the wheat harvest. ‘Not an ear to the acre’ is my brother Harry’s report to me. On Rappahannock too, there is a total failure—it is not quite so bad with us, but the crop is a very short one.”

“Monday, Dec. 13, 1830.

“The last sentence was not finished until today. I have been very much distressed by my complaint and, as the Packet, which will carry this, does not sail until Thursday morning, I have written by snatches. Saturday, I made out to dine with the famous ‘Beef Steaks’; which I had a great desire to do. The scene was unique. Nothing permitted but Beef Steaks and potatoes, port wine, punch, brandy and water, &c. The broadest mirth and most unreserved freedoms among the *members*; every thing and every body burlesqued; in short, a party of school boys on a frolic could not have been more unrestrained in the expression of their merriment. I was delighted with the conviviality and *heartiness* of the company. Among other toasts, we had that ‘great friend of Liberty, Prince Metternich’ and a great deal more of admirable foolery. The company waited chiefly on themselves. The songs, without exception, were mirth-stirring and well sung. In short, here I saw a sample of old English manners; for the same tone has been kept up from the foundation of the club—more than a century. Nothing could be happier than the burlesque speeches of some of the officers of the club; especially a Mr. Stephenson (Vice P.) who answered to the call of ‘Boots!’



Maj. Gen. Sir Andrew Barnard presided admirably, and another gallant officer, Gen'l Sir Ronald Ferguson, greatly contributed to our hilarity also. Admiral Dundas (not of the Scotch clan) a new Ld of Admiralty, who came in for his full share of humour and left-handed compliments, paid his full quota towards the entertainment. In short, I have not chuckled with laughter before since I left Virginia."<sup>1</sup>

In a letter to his niece, Randolph gives us another glimpse of his movements in England in 1830:

"I have been out but twice from a sense of duty. On Friday last to the Duke of Devonshire's and on Saturday to dine with the Lord Mayor. The Duke of Devon has been pointedly attentive to me during all my visits to England, and I could not decline his invitation without apparent insensibility not to say rudeness; and as I am not King I could not refuse a Lord Mayor's invitation."<sup>2</sup>

In the London *Morning Herald* of Dec. 27, 1830, the entertainment given by the Lord Mayor was pronounced "a very splendid" one, and the speech of thanks that it drew from Randolph a "very elegant" one.

An important appendix to this letter consists of certain statements made by Peter Irving, the brother of Washington Irving, on the strength of information given him by the latter in regard to Randolph when Randolph was in England in 1830:

"Randolph, however well informed on points of etiquette, had his own notions about doing things, and I have heard Mr. Irving give an amusing account of his presentation at court in London as it came under his own notice. Mr. McLane and Mr. Irving called for him in a carriage, and they found him prepared to accompany them with black coat and black small-clothes, with knee buckles, white stockings and shoes with gold buckles, a sword, and a little black hat. They looked wonder-

<sup>1</sup> *Sou. Lit. Mess.*, Richm., Nov. 1856, 382-385.

<sup>2</sup> London, Dec. 21, 1830, Bryan MSS.

ingly at his dress, so likely with his odd figure to attract observation. He pointed to his gold buckles. 'No sham about them; Rundell and Bridge by ——!' To some observations as to the propriety of his dress, 'I wear no man's livery by ——!' But, said Mr. Irving, the object of a court costume is to avoid awkwardness and challenge; there is a convenience in it, and, at all events, you don't want a sword. 'Oh, now Irving, as to a sword, you need not pretend to teach me about that. My father wore a sword before me by ——.' Mr. Irving explained that the sword belonged to a different costume, but was out of place in that dress. This seemed to strike Randolph, and he unbuckled his sword afterwards, and left it in the carriage. As he was about to enter the ante-chamber, where the foreign ministers are in waiting, he was, as Mr. Irving had feared, stopped by the usher. Mr. Irving immediately explained who he was, and he was permitted to pass. 'There now, Randolph,' said he, 'you see one of the inconveniences of being out of costume.' In the ante-chamber, the foreign ministers eyed him curiously. Admitted to the presence chamber, he preceded Mr. Irving, made his bow to Royalty in his turn, and then passed before other members of the Royal Family. As he went by the Duke of Sussex, the latter beckoned Mr. Irving. 'Irving,' said he, with his thumb reversed over his right shoulder, and moving it significantly up and down, half suppressing a laugh at the same time, 'who's your friend Hokey-Pokey?' Mr. Irving, jealous for the honor of his country, replied with emphasis: 'That, Sir, is John Randolph, the United States Minister to Russia, and one of the most distinguished orators of the United States.' Sometime afterwards, Mr. Irving was dining with the Duke of Sussex, and the latter inquired after McLane, who had returned to his own country; then, pursuing his inquiries, he added, with a significant smile: 'And how is our friend, Hokey-Pokey?' Randolph, said Mr. Irving, in concluding these anecdotes, a long, gaunt, thin poke of a fellow, with no beard, small features, bright eyes, attracted attention wherever he went. He was queer, but always wore the air and stamp of a gentleman. I asked what impression he made by his conversational powers: 'He was remarkable in

this respect,' he replied, 'but he was not at home among the London wits. I dined ~~with him~~ when Sydney Smith and others were present, but he ~~did~~ not shine; he was not in his beat.'<sup>1</sup>

Since such profuse profanity as marks this narrative has never, so far as we know, been imputed to Randolph in his lucid hours by anyone else, we cannot but indulge the idea that it was simply the sort that gave point to one of Franklin's famous stories. A fellow, in relating a dispute that had arisen between Queen Anne and the Archbishop of Canterbury concerning a vacant mitre, which the Queen wished to bestow on a person, whom the Archbishop thought unworthy of it, made both the Queen and the Archbishop swear three or four thumping oaths in every sentence of the dispute. A by-stander, filled with surprise, asked: "But did the Queen and the Archbishop swear so at one another?" "Oh no, no!" said the fellow, "that is only my way of telling the story."

Now that we have had portraiture of Randolph as he was abroad, we might as well have a little caricature besides, and this is copiously supplied to us by "Julius."

"On his first arrival in London," Julius declares, "all eyes were struck with his figure in the streets. The human form from all parts of the globe was to be seen there, but nothing like his. It seemed to belong to a class by itself; long, lean and loose-jointed—a withered face, a shrunken body, and the whole expression peculiar and startling. Many who passed him turned around to take another look. How mysterious! exclaimed one; how outlandish! another. A term to which the English are addicted. His complexion was death-like; sometimes he moved about on foot, and sometimes rode a pony. When saluting people, his voice would mount up to a high shrill key, as if he were hallooing. The particulars of his dress were obscured by a long cloak, which, in one respect, claimed resemblance to the doublet of Gaffer Gray—it was not

<sup>1</sup> *Life &c., of W. I.*, v. 2, 439, 442.

very new. As it came tight about him, or waved in the wind, many a sidelong glance did it get from the passing brokers of Monmouth St.<sup>1</sup> . . .

“His grotesque aspect, the object of popular stare, and scientific speculation; his everlasting attempts at effect, whether in conduct or conversation; his harangues given out in accents so novel and with no poor rivalry of the fame and fashion of Anacharsis Cloots or Sir Walter Scott’s ‘Wamba,’ his diverting lapses from the observances of the world, his profound obeisance to rank, which, though it overflowed in temporary good nature at that epoch of his life and travels, kept showing itself in ways exquisitely ludicrous, all this and more; how can I ever forget it.”<sup>2</sup>

Then, after speaking of the curiosity and merriment, excited by Randolph’s appearance and conversation, Julius continues in this manner:

“It was a scene *sui generis*, novel even for London. Repeated it was with variations: ‘Hoby’s boots forever, so help him Heaven and Manton’s guns—his rascally overseer who had cheated him—the roundheads, how he hated them—the cavaliers, how he loved them—Virginia, old Virginia, true to Charles—the vermin in his own country that fattened on the public crib; he gave it to them—that he did and would; Bladensburg; Yazoo; the Yankees; the Negroes; Mason’s and Dixon’s line; the man in the moon; everything danced in the astounding gallimaufry. To the sensibilities, to the restraints, bodily and of mind, to the multiplied obligations and habitudes, to all the anxious and assiduous cultivation that go to make up the gentleman he was a stranger. His irregular and undisciplined temper was the parent of rudeness in him, and his vanity hurried him into offences against good sense and decorum.”<sup>3</sup>

In another place Julius describes Randolph as a monopolist or a mute when conversation went its rounds; by turns a misanthrope and a Merry Andrew.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *J. R. Abroad and at Home*, 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, 13.

And not more indignant was Mrs. Malaprop over criticism of her diction than Randolph must have been when even his fastidious orthoepy was impeached by Julius.

"True scholarship," said Julius, "repelled his pretensions. Tried by chastened standards, they came under the sentence which his burlesque obtrusions of them provoked. It was made known by the Oxonians in guarded, yet significant jeers. Neither his Latinity nor his English could pass. His syntax, nay his very orthoepy, (*a*) was remarked to be as defective as his infringements of the canons of taste were perpetual both in his selection of topics and manner of treating them. It was really hard to determine whether in his *furor linguæ* Nature or Priscian got most blows from him."<sup>1</sup>

The immediate occasion for this elaborate arraignment was a note appended by Randolph to his speech on Retrenchment and Reform in the House in 1828 in which he had instituted the comparison between the relative qualifications of Rush and Caligula's horse for a post of public responsibility.<sup>2</sup> The deadly arrow, which Randolph shot at Rush in this note, went to its mark all the more surely for the accompanying lines, with which it was feathered:

"A few days ago, I stumbled upon the following stanza of an unfinished poem on the glories and worthies of our Administration:

" ' And as for R., his early locks of snow,  
Betray the frozen region that's below,  
Though Jove upon the race bestow'd some fire;  
The gift was all exhausted by the Sire,  
A sage consum'd what thousands well might share  
And ashes only fell upon the heir!"

These lines are the only article of the growth, produce or manufacture of the country, north of the Patapsco, that I have

<sup>1</sup> *J. R. abroad and at home*, 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoirs of J. Q. Adams*, July 26, 1828, v. 8, 64.

knowingly used since the Tariff Bill passed. They are by a witty son of a witty sire—as Burns sings—‘A true gude fellow’s get.’”<sup>1</sup>

It was during his last sojourn in London that Randolph uttered his well-known paraphrase of the excuse given by Adam for eating fruit from the forbidden tree. He had been invited by Lord —— to take lunch with him, but, when on his way to the lunch, he stopped to call on a lady, and was so agreeably entertained by her conversation that he was still enjoying her society when the lunch was served. Afterwards when he joined Lord ——, and was taxed with being late, he replied: “The woman tempted me and I did eat.”<sup>2</sup>

In one of his letters to his niece, Randolph pronounced Friendship, Love, and Religion the only sources from which happiness can be derived.<sup>3</sup> When he was not unbalanced, or unduly swayed by prejudice or temper, there can be no doubt that his heart was a truly generous, compassionate, and tender one. Occasional presents of silver and frequent presents of books were among the tokens which he was in the habit of giving of his friendship or love. On one occasion, he presented a young lady with a Hebrew Lexicon bearing this inscription on its fly-leaf: “To a young lady learning Hebrew from an old gentleman who knows nothing of it, and is past learning.”<sup>4</sup>

Francis Scott Key, he wrote to Dudley, might have any one of his horses except only his English mare and Cornelia<sup>5</sup>; and to Van Buren he gave a fine saddle-horse and wished to give a handsome pair of carriage-horses besides.<sup>6</sup> Not only did he offer to pledge his credit in aid of James

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 317 (note).

<sup>2</sup> *Recollections of a Long Life*, by Jos. Packard, 110.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Nov. 20, 1825, Bryan MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Letter to Elizabeth T. Coalter, 1825, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>5</sup> Feb. 4, 1817, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 185.

<sup>6</sup> *Van Buren Papers*, Libr. Cong.

Monroe when they were friends; but, on one occasion, when his friend, Judge Thomas T. Bouldin, then a young man, was in a community, where he was but little known, and was experiencing some difficulty in obtaining a security as a fiduciary, the shrill voice of Randolph was heard, calling out above the clamor of a crowd that he would become his security. The act, Judge Bouldin said, at once lifted him out of his dilemma and placed him on a high elevation.<sup>1</sup>

How Randolph extended to his nephews and his other youthful protégés the same liberal measure of his bounty that he might have extended to a son we shall presently see.

Appeals of suffering or want met with a ready response at his hands. "He was charitable," Benton tells us, "but chose to conceal the hand that administered relief. I have often seen him send little children out to give to the poor."<sup>2</sup>

On one occasion, we find him bringing a young boy down from Roanoke to Richmond so that he could receive proper surgical attention. On another, it is said that he turned his horses and plows into the fields of an absent young friend whose crop was being smothered by weeds and grass. Among the written scraps which he preserved, was a brief note from one Richard Knowles, who would seem to have been an overseer at one time at Bizarre. It thanks him for a gift of wine, which the note says that the recipient would gladly acknowledge in his own hand but for his low state of health.<sup>3</sup>

The journal which he kept, when he was on the *Concord*, brings to our knowledge the fact that he was thoughtful enough to send a box of Château Margaux to the steerage of that ship.<sup>4</sup> "Although I do not deal in bows and humble servants and all that trash, yet I have some of the

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 81.

<sup>2</sup> 30 Yrs.' View, 474.

<sup>3</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>4</sup> Va. Hist. Soc.

milk of human kindness in my composition," he once wrote to Nicholson.<sup>1</sup> And so he had; and more than most men have.

A truthful, though quaint, summary was that of the English traveller, John Lambert:

"Ardent and affectionate in his disposition, he is susceptible of strong and permanent affection; but, if injured, he exhibits but little of that mild forbearance which is inculcated in the gentle precepts of our Holy Religion. His private history, however, abounds with evidences of the most humane and philanthropic feeling."<sup>2</sup>

Writing to Theodore Dudley of the death of a trusted and favorite overseer of his, he gives this account of the event:

"Mr. Curd breathed his last on Thursday morning, half past three o'clock, after a most severe illness, which lasted sixteen days. I insisted upon his coming up here, where he had every possible aid that the best medical advice and most assiduous nursing could afford him. During the last week of his sickness, I was never absent from the house but twice, about an hour each time, for air and exercise; I sat up with him, and gave him almost all his medicines, with my own hand, and *saw* that every possible attention was paid to him. This is to me an unspeakable comfort; and it pleased God to support me under this trying scene by granting me better health than I had experienced for seven years. On Thursday evening, I followed him to the grave; and, soon after, the effects of the fatigue and distress of mind that I had suffered prostrated my strength and spirits, and I became ill. Three successive nights of watching were too much for my system to endure; but I am now better, although weak and giddy. I was with him, when he died, without a groan or change of feature. My servants, also, have been all sick, except Essex, Hetty, and Nancy."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 4, 1800, Nicholson MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Travels Through Canada & the U. S.*, 1816, v. 2, 422.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 22, 1811, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 104.



On the same day, Randolph wrote to John Taylor, of Caroline:

"This man was an *overseer*. Would to God the public had such, for he was of great skill and judgment in his calling, indefatigable, laborious, well-behaved and *honest!!!* Although at stated wages, ever *mindful* of his *duty* and the *interest* of his employer. Under his auspices, my plantation affairs were rapidly travelling in the very opposite direction to those of the public."<sup>1</sup>

Jacob Harvey was right when he said that, if Randolph "*did* take a fancy, the rank of the person never seemed to weigh with him for a moment," and that he admired especially those who never pretended to more knowledge than they actually possessed, but understood thoroughly what they did know.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, Randolph's sensibility to the sufferings of others was almost morbid. During his first visit to England, he wrote to his niece on one occasion:

"At Worcester, in driving into the Hop Pole Inn yard, the postillion had nearly killed a poor girl with a child in her arms. She was thrown down, but God be praised! neither were hurt. I would not endure what I felt, while the suspense lasted, for any consideration."<sup>3</sup>

We are told by James Bouldin that Randolph's feelings were once so moved by the recollection of "two little hares" hanging by the neck, upon which he had come, when hunting in his boyhood, that tears stood in his eyes.<sup>4</sup> In fact, we are asked to believe that his susceptibility to compassionate impulses even took in the vegetable kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 22, 1811, *Mass. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>2</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 345.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 2, 184.

<sup>4</sup> Bouldin, 80.

“Mr. Randolph would not permit even a switch to be cut anywhere near the house (at Roanoke),” Wm. H. Elliott, who was a schoolmate of Tudor Randolph, says in his *School Boy Reminiscences of John Randolph*. “Without being aware of such an interdiction, I one day committed a serious trespass. Tudor and I were one day roving in the woods near the house, when I observed a neat hickory plant, about an inch thick, which I felled. Tudor expressed his regret after seeing what I had done, saying he was afraid his uncle would be angry. I went immediately to Mr. Randolph, and informed him of what I had ignorantly done, and expressed regret for it. He took the stick, looked pensively at it for some seconds, as if commiserating its fate. Then looking at me more in sorrow than in anger, he said. ‘Sir I would not have had it done for fifty Spanish milled dollars!’ I had seventy-five cents in my pocket, at that time called four-and-sixpence, and had some idea of offering it to the owner of the premises as an equivalent for the damage I had done, but, when I heard about the fifty Spanish milled dollars, I was afraid of insulting him by offering the meagre atonement of seventy-five cents. I wished very much to get away from him, but thought it rude to withdraw abruptly without knowing whether he was done with me. ‘Did you want this for a cane?’ ‘No, Sir.’ ‘No, you are not old enough to need a cane. Did you want it for any particular purpose?’ ‘No, Sir, I only saw it was a pretty stick, and thought I’d cut it.’ ‘We can be justified in taking animal life, only to furnish us food, or to remove some hurtful object out of the way. We cannot be justified in taking even vegetable life without having some useful object in view.’ He then quoted the following lines from Cowper:

“ ‘I would not enter on my list of friends,  
 Tho’ graced with polished manners and fine sense,  
 Yet wanting sensibility, the man  
 Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.’

‘Now God Almighty planted this thing, and you have killed it without any adequate object. It would have grown to a large nut-tree, in whose boughs numerous squirrels would have gambolled and feasted on its fruit. Those squirrels in their

turn might have furnished food for some human beings.' Here he made a pause, but looked as if he had something more to say; yet only added, 'I hope and believe, Sir, you will never do the like again.' 'Never, Sir, never!' He got up and put the stick in a corner, and I made my escape to Tudor in an adjacent room, where he had remained an invisible but sympathizing auditor of this protracted rebuke. It was sometime before I could cut a switch or a fishing rod without feeling that I was doing some sort of violence to the economy of the Vegetable Kingdom."<sup>1</sup>

In his *John Randolph*, Henry Adams says sarcastically that he refrains from inquiring too deeply what the children of Charlotte County would have said to a suggestion of climbing Randolph's knee<sup>2</sup>; a remark brought out by a sentence in Randolph's speech in the House, in 1828, on Retrenchment and Reform which related to his proposed retirement: "The very children will climb around my knees to welcome me." The sneer is a wanton one. When Randolph said that he believed that there was no man in the world so fond of children as he was, he had some color of right to make the assertion. There are homes in Southside Virginia today, such as that of Mrs. J. Spooner Epes, of Petersburg, a descendant of Edward Booker and of the Gaineses, of Mossingford, in Charlotte County, who are descendants of Wm. M. Watkins, in which Randolph's love of children has been handed down as an unbroken tradition.<sup>3</sup> "Do not let Edward forget me," is one message that he sends to Nicholson about his son, Edward<sup>4</sup>; and, some three years afterwards, he writes again to Nicholson: "Do not let Edward forget 'Rannie.'"<sup>5</sup> And, when in due season, Edward enjoyed the companionship of a little sister, Randolph did not forget her either in his letters to

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 78.

<sup>2</sup> P. 295.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Elizabeth Booker Epes to the author, Sept. 9, 1918.

<sup>4</sup> Bizarre, July 1, 1804, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>5</sup> Bizarre, Sept. 27, 1806, *Id.*

Nicholson.<sup>1</sup> In another letter to Nicholson, he refers to the Nicholson children as "the papooses."

'It would delight me very much to spend a few weeks with you," he once wrote to Francis Scott Key. "I would even try to be an usher in your school. [Mr. Key was teaching his own children.] At least I could teach your younger children to read. Give my love to them all and to their mother."<sup>2</sup>

After dining on one occasion with the dignified and elegant Mrs. Bell, he wrote to Theodore Dudley: "I dined there a few days ago and have quite overcome the coyness of little Mary Anne, who says, 'I love Mr. Randolph.'"<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Joseph M. Daniel, of Charlotte County, used to tell how highly gratified he was when he was on a visit to her house, and one of her little girls went into her garden, and culled a bouquet of beautiful flowers, and presented them to him. "She had chosen the old man for her valentine," he declared, and, the next time he visited Mrs. Daniel, he brought the little girl some fruit, saying gracefully, as he placed it in her hands: "Flowers produce fruit." A little later, when a member of the Daniel family visited Roanoke, he found that the flowers had been preserved in water on Randolph's centre table.<sup>4</sup> In one of his letters to "Master Joseph A. Clay," the brother of John Randolph Clay, Randolph sends his love to "dear little Anna," the sister of the Clays. Repeatedly, in his correspondence with his niece, he sends gentle messages to her little sister, whose shyness he was determined to overcome, as he had overcome that of Mary Anne Bell. "Let the taciturn little Anne make up for me a bulletin of your health every other day and send it to town for the postman, and, by this means, she will break the ice of her reserve, I hope," is one

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, Aug. 27, 1804, *Id.*

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 95.

<sup>3</sup> Richm., Mar. 20, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 156.

<sup>4</sup> Bouldin, 75.

of his injunctions to Elizabeth T. Coalter. And, later in the same letter, he adds: "If we were together, Anne could read to us; you would walk about the room, and I should now and then throw in a word which should produce a following of suit from you both. God bless you both! This is no senseless or insincere ejaculation."<sup>1</sup> But the ice finally gave way, we know, because six months later he wrote to his niece: "Dear little Anne, I return her love most sincerely and, if I were near enough, you and she and mammy [Mammy Aggy] should be my almost inseparable companions."<sup>2</sup> In a letter to Nicholson, he asks him to present his compliments to a Mr. Cooke and his good family not forgetting Miss Susan, to whom he dared send his best love. "Tell them," he further said in this letter, "that Sophia attracted all eyes and many hearts at the British Envoy's fête, where she danced like a sylph."<sup>3</sup> (a)

Randolph spoke but the truth when he said on one occasion that to love and be loved was a necessity of his nature.

At one time or another, he took under his affectionate patronage at Roanoke no less than four different lads: Carter Coupland, a grandson of his friend, Mrs. Tabb, John Randolph Clay, the son of his friend, Joseph Clay, of Philadelphia, and John Randolph Bryan and Thomas F. Bryan, the sons of his friend, Joseph Bryan. In 1811, he wrote to Theodore Dudley: "Carter Coupland became a member of my family a few days since. Some society was indispensable to me and he is a well-disposed boy, who, I trust, will relieve in some degree my uncomfortable situation."<sup>4</sup> In the same year, Carter was taken sick at Roanoke, and he had made such a favorable impression upon Randolph that the latter wrote to Theodore Dudley

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 18, 1822, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Dec. 29, 1822, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Georgetown, Jan 22. 1812, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>4</sup> Roanoke, Aug. 12, 1811, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 97.

that he felt that he was too strongly bound to him by his kind attentions to himself and family to think of leaving him under such circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

When he learnt that Joseph Clay had died, leaving John Randolph Clay and other children behind him, he wrote at once to Theodore Dudley, who was then in Philadelphia: "I consider Randolph as my son"<sup>2</sup>; and, as his son, Randolph treated him from that time on, taking him under his roof at Roanoke in 1815; educating him at Ararat and Mr. Kilpatrick's school in Halifax County; appointing him Secretary of Legation at St. Petersburg, and opening up to him the diplomatic career, in the course of which he became chargé d'Affaires at that court, and Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Peru.<sup>3</sup> At times, when Randolph was in London, after leaving St. Petersburg, he made some querulous complaints to Clay about the "careless and slovenly" manner in which Clay "put up" his letters to him and the like<sup>4</sup>; but the affectionate relations between the two really lasted until Randolph's death, and, among the most sensible letters known to us, are some that Judge Leigh, who had become a sort of third father to Clay, wrote to him in regard to the obligations of gratitude and deference that he owed to Randolph.<sup>5</sup> Clay was little more than a youth, when he accompanied Randolph to Russia, and the barbaric splendor of its "mighty monarch," as Clay once termed the Czar, and the pompous ceremonial of its court threatened to turn his head at one time,<sup>6</sup> but he appears to have acquitted himself very well on the whole in the discharge of the responsibilities imposed on him by Randolph's departure from St. Petersburg; and his sub-

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Oct. 20, 1811, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 111.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 8, 1811, *Id.*, 102.

<sup>3</sup> *Works of Jas. Buchanan*, ed. by Jno. Bassett Moore, v. 2, 193 (note 2).

<sup>4</sup> E.g. London, Jan. 15, 1831, *Clay Papers*, Libr. Cong.

<sup>5</sup> Halifax, Mar. 10, & Aug. 10, 1833, *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> J. R. Clay to *Richm. Enq.*, Jan. 17, 1831, *Clay Papers*, Libr. Cong.

sequent career appears to have been such as to justify the care that Randolph had bestowed upon him.

When Randolph took a boy under his patronage, the process was so much like that of complete adoption that the mother could not always refrain from exhibiting a little jealousy, and there are letters extant from Randolph to Clay's mother which must have been a severe test of her patience, unless she was constituted very differently from most fatuous parents. In one letter, he told her that he had just seen his little namesake at school and that, after being somewhat laughed at by his school-fellows for his helplessness and effeminacy, he was now as manly and as hardy as the best of them.<sup>1</sup> In another letter, written to Mrs. Clay some three years later, when he was sending the lad home to Philadelphia to see her, he expressed himself in terms of such candor that her feelings must have been decidedly mixed. The magisterial tone of the letter, however, can readily be forgotten when the parental oversight and affection, of which John Randolph Clay had been the recipient at Roanoke, and the final success of the discipline, to which he had been subjected, are duly borne in mind. This is what Randolph said:

"You will find him, Madam, less improved in knowledge of books than he probably would have been, had he remained in Philadelphia. The cause of his slow progress is to be found in his indolence and preference of play to work, natural to children of his age and which fear of the rod or desire to excel can alone overcome. When he shall feel the disposition to learn, from either of these causes, he will make no slow progress, his natural capacity being above mediocrity. But, if he has not been taught book-learning, he has gained a much more valuable knowledge and, in place of some bad habits (if a child of his age, when he came to live with me, can be said to have had any habits), which I trust he has laid aside forever, he has

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Dec. 13, 1816, Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.



acquired, I hope, some good ones. The Persian youth in the days of Cyrus, when they were feared for their prowess and respected for their virtues, were taught to shoot the bow and to ride on horseback with skill, but above all, to *speake the Truth*—which it is as necessary to teach as Greek or Mathematics; or, ten chances to one, it will never be learned. On this subject, I think it my solemn and bounden duty to tell you that I have had much trouble with your son; I hope I have eradicated his propensity to fibbing. To do this, I imposed on him an almost Pythagorean silence. Great praters have a temptation, hardly resistible, to exaggeration and falsehood, and the first thing necessary for a child to be taught, after he has learned to talk, is to hold his tongue and not obtrude upon his seniors and betters the pert and crude effusions of his mind. On this subject, let me entreat you to have an eye to the smallest germination of deceit or falsehood, dissimulation or simulation, and, as you value your sons' respectability in this world or welfare in the world to come, to punish it exemplarily. Let not the hand of Dr. Physick be stayed by a false humanity from eradicating, whilst yet it may be done, a cancerous or schirrous tumour. Let the knife and the cautery, potential or actual, be fearlessly used, where the art of Surgery shall indicate their application. I sincerely hope you will find no occasion for them. The boy is a fine boy and has long seemed sensible, when I have talked with him, of the folly as well as wickedness of untruth.

“2. He has been taught to obey, promptly, unhesitatingly. To preserve this invaluable habit, the spirit of command must be exercised over him; it must, otherwise, be lost.

“3. He has been taught to rise early and to be temperate in his meats and drink. Milk has been substituted for that enervating diet drink, miscalled Tea. Let him not destroy his stomach by recurring to its habitual use. If milk is not to be had, give him water, cream and sugar, but let it be drunk cold.

“3. (*sic*) All his effeminate habits of flannels, night dresses &c: were laid aside from the commencement of the summer of 1815. His constitution has been toughened and hardened by habits of exercise in the open air. Let them not be substituted by warm parlors, a bed chamber with a fire in it, curtains and



sedentary habits, which must render him a burthen to himself and to others, and probably open for him a premature grave. What is all the learning in the world to him who has not strength to use it? It is armour that he cannot wield—the weight of which crushes instead of defending him.

“4. He has been instructed in the great and *peculiar* Truths of Religion. The depravity of man—the *prepenseness* of his heart to idols, not carved images, indeed, like that of Jugger-naut, but as soul-destroying; the creatures of Ambition, Avarice, Pride, Vanity and Sensuality, ‘Hatred and Envy and Malice and all Uncharitableness from the which, in all time of our prosperity as well as of our Tribulation, Good Lord! deliver us, Amen.’

“I have thus, my dear Madam, given you the undisguised sentiments of a sincere and therefore plain (perhaps too blunt) friend of your son. An obstinate constitutional preference of the true over the agreeable has thro life proved a bar to my success (as 'tis called) in the world. I am satisfied to have told the truth and to have done my duty; and to the good Providence of God I leave the result; to him who will overrule and set at naught the councils of the children of this world, who are wiser in their generation than the Children of Light. Congratulating you all on the meeting, I am, Madam.”<sup>1</sup>

After leaving school, John Randolph Clay thought of practicing law in Virginia, and several letters from Randolph to him bear upon this topic. On one occasion, Clay asked Randolph's advice in this connection, and he received the following reply. It suggests the idea that Randolph did not think that the young man was as laborious as he might have been:

“You ask my advice. I have a poor opinion of its efficacy. Let me point out to you the example of Mr. L. and also of Mr. J. Marshall of Charlotte C. H., who has succeeded by dint of sheer labour, without Mr. Leigh's abilities. If you are not impressed with the indispensable necessity of industry, words from me will never make the impression. ‘Idleness is the

<sup>1</sup> Baltimore, Mar. 14, 1820, Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.

mother of all Vice' says the proverb; but Laziness is the father of Idleness. There is no recipe for making a lazy man work. He will see his family want; he will want himself—he will borrow, beg, or steal; but work he will not. I have lived long enough to know that it is folly in the extreme to undertake to regulate the conduct of others. The motive must be within and not without. There must be an inherent love of eventual profit over present gratification, without which the greatest abilities are a curse rather than an advantage to their possessor."<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, there are indications in a previous letter from Randolph to John Randolph Clay that Randolph deemed his protégé a little slow in taking up the task of earning a livelihood.

"Has the example of Peyton Berkeley," he said, "no effect upon you? See that young gentleman teaching school rather than burthen his parent, although his father has a large landed estate. If I were in your place, I would propose to Mr. Leigh to teach his little girls at vacant hours."<sup>2</sup>

The two Bryan lads became inmates of Roanoke in 1816, and left it for their home in Georgia in 1820; and during their residence at Roanoke they were pupils, first at Ararat, and then at Mr. Kilpatrick's school, in Halifax County. When they left Roanoke, Randolph purchased a vehicle for them at Petersburg, supplied them with a horse from his own stable to match another that had been purchased for them, accompanied them as far as North Carolina on their homeward journey, and, on leaving them, placed them under the care of Quashee, one of his most experienced drivers, who drove them all the way to Savannah. He had grown so attached to the boys that it must have cost him a severe struggle to part with them; but who could have resisted such an appeal as this from

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Dec. 16, 1827, Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> May 17, 1826, *Id.*

their mother, who had evidently begun to feel that, if they were detained much longer at Roanoke, they might become weaned from their blood relations:

“I begin to long to embrace my children, and they, I am sure must wish to see their mother, sisters and brother. A longer separation cannot, I think, be of any material advantage to them; on the contrary, those charming feelings, that should ever be kept alive in a family, may in their infant minds be forever lost, if much longer absent from their nearer and dearer ties. If the estate and myself are successful in our crops, I wish the boys to spend next winter with me, provided it meets your approbation.”

In this same letter, Delia Bryan spoke of a third son of hers—Joseph—as a noble-hearted boy, and a little tactlessly added that he loved her with all the ardor that her son Randolph once did.<sup>1</sup> The letter wounded Randolph’s feelings, but we can hardly regret the fact when we find that it drew from her this second letter, which is another testimonial to the nobler side of Randolph’s nature.

“It is with feelings of the *truest* grief that I now address you. That I should for a *moment* give *you* pain by an involuntary expression, is real agony to think of. Believe me, Mr. Randolph, that my heart never in its right mood accus’d you of *anything* that could voluntarily take from my five joys. In my reflecting moments, I have severely reprimanded myself for the involuntary expression, and fear’d that you would feel in its full extent that which I never intended should have so much force.

“I can scarcely bear to offer an apology for myself, and yet! if you will reflect that I have for many, many months been wishing my sons to visit me, and that you yourself *desir’d* it, you will make some allowance for my feelings when I received Randolph’s letter. To say more on this mortifying subject is I hope unnecessary. I have *ever* view’d you as my first and best friend, and, for worlds, I would not think otherwise. Suffer me to hope that you will ever continue to me and the

<sup>1</sup> Nonchalance, Apr. 23, 1819, Bryan MSS.

children of your Friend that kindness and interest which I have ever been proud to boast of. Let us, *I beg* you, hear from you as often as you may find it agreeable to write, and believe that you will ever find in me and my children sincere and warm friends. My father and his excellent wife have been anticipating the arrival of my sons at Rose Hill [on the Eastern Shore of Maryland] for the same length of time nearly that I have, and their reception there will be of the tenderest and most gratifying nature to me. How long they will remain, I know not. As you have not drawn on Major Screven for the money we are so desirous you should receive, he says he will try to send rice on to Baltimore, and by that means procure a sufficient sum for you. Indeed, I fear my boys have been a very great expense to you.”<sup>1</sup>

As to the two Bryans, when they were at Roanoke, they formed a devoted attachment to Randolph which never ceased, except with their lives. Writing to his brother, John Randolph, from St. Mary's College, in 1827, Tom Bryan [T. M. F.] said:

“Perhaps there is no place with which I am better acquainted than with Roanoke, and I may say that there is but one place for which I feel more sincere attachment. Clay, you say, is very little changed, and that Mr Randolph is the same that he always was to us. How could he change! A man having such a soul as John Randolph has but one face for his friends. I am glad to hear you say that he is better than he has been; perhaps your visit may have had the effect of reviving him. I remember when I went to see him in Washington in 1826, seeing me had a very marked effect upon his health. He shows his joy at seeing a friend he loves.”<sup>2</sup>

Then, after quoting an extract from a letter which he had just received from John Randolph of Roanoke, Tom continues: “Brother Randolph, I don't know but I feel a kind of reverence and love for that man.”

<sup>1</sup> Nonchalance, Dec. 6, 1819, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Oct. 16, 1827, Bryan MSS.

These feelings were fully shared by John Randolph Bryan; and, to realize how fully, one has but to turn to the communications in which, many years after the death of Randolph, he roundly denounced the parts of Bouldin's *Home Reminiscences of John Randolph of Roanoke* which were derogatory to his god-father. "My first meeting with Mr. Randolph," he said in one of them, "was in Baltimore in 1816, and I can never forget the sweet way he met my brother and self."<sup>1</sup> In the same letter, he said that John Randolph Clay, Thomas Bryan, and he were treated by Randolph as if they were his children, and that one or the other of them often slept in the same bed with him, and that, when Randolph was absent from them, he often wrote to them. "He took an interest in their manners, language [and] reading," he declared, "and made them say their prayers and often read to them."<sup>2</sup> In another place, in the same letter, Bryan says: "In his intercourse with us boys, the sweetness of his manner and considerateness to our blunders and awkwardness was truly parental."<sup>3</sup> Even after the Bryans had returned to their home in Georgia, Randolph's affectionate interest in them underwent no change.

"I was with him in New York in 1823," John Randolph Bryan further says, "and the following year he took the trouble, when I was a Midshipman, to pay a visit to the *Peacock* in Hampton Roads to see me. On my return from sea in 1827, I stayed a month with him at his home. Returning from sea again, I received great kindness in 1829 during the Virginia Convention. He treated me as a son, and on an occasion, when Mr. Wickham had all the prominent members of that illustrious body, who composed that Convention, to dine with him (such as Madison, Monroe, Giles, Barbour, Chief Justice Marshall, Leigh, &c.), he took me with him to the

<sup>1</sup> Letter to Mr. Robertson, Mar. 27, 1878, Bryan MSS

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



**JOHN RANDOLPH BRYAN, JOHN RANDOLPH'S GODSON**

**From the original painted for John Randolph, and now owned by John Stewart Bryan  
of Richmond, Va.**



dinner and gave me an opportunity, never to be forgotten, or repeated, to see those gentlemen."<sup>1</sup>

Even when the Bryans were at school in Prince Edward County or Halifax County, they were frequently at Roanoke on Saturdays or holidays; and the Rev. Wm. S. Lacy, in his *Early Recollections of John Randolph*, has much to say about Randolph's visits to Ararat when John Randolph Clay and the Bryans were pupils there under the care of the writer, who published his reminiscences anonymously, and wrote as if he had been merely a pupil at the school.

"It was Mr. Lacy's [the writer's] custom to hear his boys recite their Latin and Greek grammar lessons before breakfast," the author of these recollections informs us, "and I have known Mr. Randolph, more than once, to come from Bizarre, and enter the schoolhouse by sun-up. At 9 o'clock, the school was *formally* opened, when all the boys read verses about in the Bible, until the chapter or portion was finished. Mr. Randolph always seemed highly pleased with this exercise, read *his* verse in turn, and, with Mr. Lacy, would sometimes ask questions. On one occasion, while reading one of the books of the Pentateuch, he stopped a lad with the question: 'Tom Miller, can you tell me who was Moses' father?' 'Jethro, Sir,' was the prompt answer. 'Why, you little dog, Jethro was his father-in-law.' Then, putting the question to four or five others by name, not one of whom could answer, he berated them soundly for their carelessness and inattention in reading, saying: 'When you were reading last week, William Cook read the verse containing the name of Moses' father, and have you all forgotten it already?' Just then a young man caught the name, and, unable to repeat the verse of the Bible, repeated a part of a line from Milton—

"The potent rod of Amram's son, &c.'!

'Ah,' said Mr. Randolph, 'that is the way you learn your Bible—get it out of other books—what little you know of it'—and,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*



with an exceedingly solemn manner and tone, added, 'And so it is with us all, and a terrible proof of our deep depravity it is, that we can relish and remember anything better than THE BOOK.' The very utterance, simple as it was, filled every one with awe, and made him feel guilty, whilst at the same time it imparted a reverence for the Bible which was never felt before, and which from one mind, at least, never will be effaced. Mr. Randolph was so pleased, however, with the young man who quoted from his favorite author, that in a short time, as soon perhaps as he could get it from Richmond, he presented him with a beautiful copy of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, with a suitable inscription in his own elegant handwriting.

"Another of the customs in the school at Ararat was to review every Friday forenoon the studies of the preceding days, and spend the afternoon in spelling, in which the whole school took part, in reading select passages from the Bible, the Spectator, Shakespeare or Milton, and in *declamation*. The first exercise, spelling, afforded great amusement occasionally. Mr. Randolph would always take the *foot*, and usually got to the *head* pretty soon, when he would leave the circle and take his seat. On one or two occasions, however, he was kept at the *foot* until the exercise was closed, much to the gratification of some of the smaller lads who had been stimulated to prepare the two columns of the Dictionary (Walker's) with perfect accuracy.

"In reading too, he would take his turn, and, after a trial of a given selection had been made by two or three boys, he would take the book and *show* them how it ought to be read. Mr. Randolph was wonderfully gifted by nature with an ear that could detect the slightest shades of tone, with a voice that was music itself, and with a taste that was as faultless as I can conceive. The modulations and intonations of his voice, the pause, the accent, emphasis, were altogether wonderful. I have felt it myself, and have seen other boys who, when he was reading, actually seemed to doubt if it was the same piece they had read but a few minutes before. Indeed, his reading seemed to shed a flood of light over the passage, and give to it a meaning which had never occurred to you before. I love music, and love it dearly—far too much for my good I some-

times fear; but, if the choice were given me to attend the best arranged musical festival this country could get up, or to hear Mr. Randolph read an hour from the Bible and Shakespeare, it would not take a second to decide. As to *declamation*, he never seemed to take much interest in it; holding to the belief that a man or boy, if he had anything to say, could say it. He used to quote to Mr Lacy on this subject a couplet from *Hudibras*:

“All a rhetorician’s rules  
Teach him but to name his tools.’

And nothing but his profound reverence for old customs, *Antiquity*, as I have often thought, could induce him to tolerate the practice of declamation in schools. I never knew him, in a single instance, to show how this ought to be done. Once, when a little fellow, intending to place his hand on his heart, put it too low down, Mr. Randolph gave a hearty laugh, suiting a remark to the gesture.

“During recess or playtime, as we used to call it, Mr. Randolph would sometimes take part in the sport of the boys, and engage in them with the greatest interest. The games, then most common, were *bandy*, *chumney*, *cat* and *marbles*, with all its variations of long taw, short taw, and knucks. I know Congressmen, now-a-days, who would think it beneath their dignity to play marbles, though some of them are men, ‘whose fathers’ Mr. Randolph ‘would have disdained to set with the dogs of his flocks.’ But I have played marbles with him and Judge Tucker many a time, and have had my knucks stung badly, too, by both of them.

“Usually he was very cheerful and communicative, and at dinner told many interesting anecdotes of George Mason, Edmund Pendleton, Patrick Henry, Nathaniel Macon, John Marshall and other celebrities; or would talk about his visit to England, describing the parks and dwellings of such and such noblemen with a particularity of detail that always deepened the interest, especially when he came to the stud of horses or the kennel of fox-hounds; his visit to Oxford with its city of colleges, his dining with one Professor, taking breakfast with another, and telling all about what was on the table; how the

servants dressed, the different kinds of gowns and caps of the masters and students in the different colleges; his purchasing his famous horse, Gascoigne, from a nobleman of the same name, for one hundred *English* guineas, when he was only a 'yearling last grass.' On another day, he would tell the boys at the table—for in good old times we always sat an hour at table, whether we had finished eating or not—of some wonderful feat of his own, in walking so many miles when but seventeen years of age; or, in later years, how many partridges he had bagged in such a hunt, beating Blake Woodson, a famous shot, and old Charner, his brother, beating Mr. Eggleston, and old William Randolph, John Miller, Theodore Dudley, both the Trents; and, becoming animated, he would say: 'Yes boys, and I beat black David Copeland all hollow—beat him blacker than he is—killed two birds to his one.' Those were glorious times to us boys."<sup>1</sup>

Once, Randolph, in a letter to John Randolph Bryan, mentioned Tom Bryan, and added: "God bless the rogue"<sup>2</sup>; and in a letter to his friend, Thomas Spalding, of Georgia, he referred to Tom Bryan as "my young friend, Tom," and said: "I love the rogue as well for his own sake as his father's."<sup>3</sup>

While they were with him, true to his highly practical instincts, he exercised as close a supervision over them as if he had been their mother. In a letter to Clay and the two Bryans, when they were at Mr. Kilpatrick's school in Halifax County, he addressed them as "my dear children," and told them that he had driven to Roanoke on the previous Sunday in the hope of seeing them before they went off to school, but that "the birds were flown;" and then, in his desire to see the lads, he concluded: "You will return with Johnny, and I trust with clean faces, hands, teeth and clothes; if any are to be dirty, let it be the last."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Union Seminary Magazine* (1893-4), v. 5, 1-10.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Apr. 7, 1830, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Apr. 9, 1829, *N. Y. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>4</sup> Nov. 5, 1818, Bryan MSS.

Nor did he ever lose an opportunity to impart knowledge to his young friends. In another letter, of later date, to John Randolph Bryan, "from Babel," he tells him that David Walker, a member of Congress from Kentucky, had died that morning of ossification of the great aorta. ("The largest artery in the system—*ossis* and *fieri*—*i. e.* becoming bone"), he explains.<sup>1</sup> And then he enjoins the boy to take care of his *Virgil*, and tells him that Clay who was at some other school, was in *Horace*.

The pleasure that it must have given Randolph to see two persons whom he loved so much as his niece and John Randolph Bryan intermarried, we can readily imagine.

Affectionate, too, in the highest degree, were the relations sustained by Randolph for many years to Theodore Dudley, who resided with him at Bizarre from 1800 until 1810, and afterwards at Roanoke until 1820.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, for the greater part of this period, he called Theodore his son, and was a father to him in every respect; maintaining and educating him at his expense, first, at school in Virginia, and, afterwards, at the medical college in Philadelphia; and applying himself assiduously in every regard to the task of fashioning him into a worthy and accomplished man. Of the letters of Chesterfield, Dr. Samuel Johnson said that, with the immorality taken out, they should be put in the hands of every young man. In the sage, scintillating letters, written by Randolph to Theodore, there is no immorality to be excised. No one can read them, written as they were without the slightest thought of publication, without feeling that Randolph was not only a brilliant man, but, at bottom, a thoroughly wise and good one. Not many men with such tastes and occupations as his would have taken the trouble, day after day, to drill a mere cousin, such as Theodore was, into the

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 1, 1820, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Deposition of Dr. Dudley Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor., Cl'k's Office, Petersburg, Va.

correct knowledge of orthography and syntax. After pointing out, in one letter, various errors which the boy had committed in a letter to him, he sums up:

“Number of lines in your letter, nine,  
 . . . . errors . . . . four;”

and following up this damning tabulation, he adds: “Surely you cannot have read over once what you wrote; moreover, the hand is a very bad one; many words blotted; and every part of it betrays negligence and a *carelessness* of *excelling*—a most deplorable symptom in a young man.”<sup>1</sup> (a) This time he relied upon mere pedagogic austerity. In the next letter to Theodore, he reminds him of the copy of the letters written by the Earl of Chatham to his nephew, which Randolph had sent to the boy, and says: “Our situation, and that of its writer and his nephew, are not dissimilar. Let us then profit by their example; whilst I endeavor to avail myself of the wisdom and experience of the one, do you also strive to imitate the amiable docility of the other, and so may God bless you, my dear boy.”<sup>2</sup> In another letter, written several years later, Randolph brings even his wit to bear upon the pride of the boy. After calling Theodore’s attention to numerous errors in a paper which he had translated from English into Latin, such as the use of “equos” for “æquos” and the like, Randolph exclaims:

“Can you believe, too, that you have made an English word of *aram*? (to satisfy you I enclose the original) thus; *a ram*. A ram, too, of all the animals in the world, is, it seems, feminine; ‘pressamq. aram’, says Ovid; but he, perchance, did not understand Latin.”<sup>3</sup>

These are but random specimens of the sedulous oversight that Randolph gave to the early education of Theo-

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Jan. 31, 1806, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 10.

<sup>2</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 2, 1806, *Id.*, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 30, 1808, *Id.*, 59.

dore. It did not go unrewarded, for enough sentences penned by the latter have survived to prove that he became the master of a correct and pointed diction. And this result represented the triumph not more of educational proficiency and discipline than of loving-kindness on the part of his real master.

When Theodore replied to Randolph's letter in regard to the translation in terms that plainly revealed his mortification, Randolph replied in turn:

"You, my son, I trust will acquit me of any unnecessary or wanton injury to your feelings, which I would forbear to wound as if they were my own. It is only to heal that I would probe. I confidently expect, therefore, by the next post a proof of the good effect of your own judicious reflections upon the disagreeable subject of my last. Your own good sense, my dear boy, if you give it fair play, *backed by industry*, will insure you a competent degree of proficiency in whatsoever pursuit you may engage."<sup>1</sup>

In a subsequent letter, written from the Library of Congress, Randolph is quick to inform Theodore that another translation of his bore scarcely any resemblance to its predecessor; being, with a single exception, *literally* correct, which proved, he said, that, when the boy committed gross errors, it was not from a want of ability to avoid them, and, indeed, impressed him with the belief that, when he chose, he could excel.<sup>2</sup>

Under Randolph's tuition, Theodore not only became a good scholar, but a fine shot. In one of his letters to him, when he was in Philadelphia, Randolph expressed the hope that he would learn to fence and to dance also; and told him that he was very anxious that he should speak French and read Italian, Spanish, and German. "As many languages as a man knows, so many times is he a

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Jan. 13, 1809, *Id.*, 59.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 17, 1809, *Id.*, 61.

man," he quoted.<sup>1</sup> He was even willing that Theodore should play upon the clarionet.<sup>2</sup>

It is not enough to say that Randolph met cheerfully all the expenses of every kind connected with the maintenance and education of Theodore, both in Virginia and at Philadelphia; for he repeatedly and eagerly urged him not to shun any expense that was necessary for his comfort or improvement. For instance, he wrote on one occasion:

"Do not fail to supply yourself with a good collection of *medical* books. Spare not on account of expense. To these by next winter you can add surgical instruments, electrical machine, etc. I should be *vexed* if you suffered false economy to interfere in a case like this. Let your dress also, without being foolishly expensive, be that of a *gentleman*. I need not tell you, who lived at Bizarre, to be *neat*. If your teeth require it, have them cleaned and plugged by a dentist. It is an operation that I think ought to be performed (cleaning) once or twice a year."<sup>3</sup>

When Theodore grew older, Randolph made more and more of a companion of him, and took him more and more into his confidence. In 1813, he wrote to him:

"You cannot oblige me so much as by thinking yourself to stand to me in the relation of a favored son, and by acting as *master* in my house and on my estate on every occasion where your own pleasure, or a regard to my interest may prompt you so to do. When you were young, and I was of opinion that it might be injurious to your future character or fortunes to encourage such views, I sedulously repressed them. Your character is now formed; consider yourself then as *not less entitled to command here* than if you were the child of my loins, as you are the son of my affections."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Nov. 15, 1807, *Id.*, 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Dec. 18, 1810, *Id.*, 81.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1807, *Id.*, 77.

<sup>4</sup> Sept., 1813, *Id.*, 142.



In another letter, written during the same year, Randolph said:

"Feeling towards you as a father, I naturally expect you to act towards me as a son. As to the word *gratitude*, let it be expunged from our vocabulary. I must not, however, be debarred the pleasure of expressing sometimes my sense of the aid and comfort which I derive from you, at the expense, I know, of your interest, and, in many instances, I fear, of your feelings. Do not misunderstand me; I mean that such a life as you must lead at Roanoke is unsuited to your character and disposition, and, therefore, I am anxious that you should remove to this [Richmond] or some other town."<sup>1</sup>

In a letter written a few days before from Richmond, Randolph was so impatient to see Dr. Dudley again that he inquired: "Cannot you meet me *here* on the road?—say Farmville, or Amelia. You know not how much you are prized by those who know you only as an acquaintance. Can you wonder then, my dear Theodore, at the value which I, who know you *au fond*, set upon you?"<sup>2</sup> In the succeeding year, he writes to Theodore that the latter's epistles bear strong symptoms of hypochondriasis.

"You, my dear Theodore," he further said, "are the chief stay and comfort of my life, and it grieves me to think that you should be buried in the wilds of Roanoke; especially when I see so many *dolts* here succeeding in the profession, of which you have made yourself master. I think I must *insist* on your removal. I know and admire the motive that keeps you where you are, and it serves but to rivet my esteem of you."<sup>3</sup>

On one occasion, he wrote to Theodore three times in one day, and, on another, four times in 12 or 18 hours. Nor would he have been surfeited, if Theodore had written to him twice as often. In one letter, he tells Theodore

<sup>1</sup> Richm., Dec. 30, 1813, *Id.*, 146.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 25, 1813, *Id.*, 146.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Mar. 7, 1814, *Id.*, 154.



that his letters are "scanty," and "look like the forced production of an ungenial climate."<sup>1</sup> Some four years later, he asked Theodore to write him "long, garrulous letters."<sup>2</sup> In a subsequent letter, he tells him that he (Theodore) is not the only correspondent who has alleged, as a reason for not replying to his letters, that he expected to hear from him.<sup>3</sup> A year or so later, he prized a letter from Theodore so highly that he wrote to him at a time, when the defamation of which he had been the subject during the War of 1812 had not entirely died out:

"Your exploits *à la chasse* have been made known to all the courts of Europe, at least to their Ministers, so far as the great and small powers are represented here; for the whole *corps diplomatique* were present yesterday when I read the extract of your letter to one of that body at the hazard of being considered as one carrying on a treasonable correspondence with England."<sup>4</sup>

In truth, there are no limits to be set to the parental affection with which Randolph cherished his young cousin's welfare. In one letter, he even tells him that, if he lacks socks, to look into the upper drawer of his desk and to take his.<sup>5</sup> Running through all of his letters to Theodore, is his intense desire that the intercourse between them should be the frank, unreserved intercourse of a loving father and a loving son.

"I was aware that your finances must have been straightened," he said to him on one occasion when the latter was a medical student at Philadelphia, "and therefore I wished to know how they stood that I might make the speediest and most efficient provision on that head. This you say is 'a delicate

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, Nov. 16, 1810, *Id.*, 75.

<sup>2</sup> Dec. 24, 1814, *Id.*, 167.

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 27, 1814, *Id.*, 169.

<sup>4</sup> Babel, Jan. 14, 1817, *Id.*, 182.

<sup>5</sup> Dec. 4, 1808, *Id.*, 54.

subject'; true it is so, in general, but not between you and myself, my dear son. Take care of your heart; pity is akin to love; grief prepares the affections for the sway of that seducing tyrant. The ladies of Philadelphia are fair and alluring, and your time of life is most propitious to their power over your heart. In the language of your profession, there is in every young man of a just and honorable way of thinking, of refined and elevated notions, a strong predisposition to this universal disease, which, like some others, all of us must have once in our lives. If the case be desperate, make me your confidant, *if you can*: I will endeavour to prove myself not unworthy of the trust. But I protest against extorted confidence and forced prayers. I, too, have been young, and know how to make allowance, I trust, for the noblest infirmity of our nature; which none but the young, or those who have not forgotten the feelings of their youth, can duly estimate."<sup>1</sup>

All the best letters written by Randolph should be blended with the *Letters to a Young Relative* and published with proper editorial notes. We know few books of the sort that would be better entitled to be considered a classic. Rarely have the precepts of universal wisdom and sound morality been enforced in sweeter or more winning accents than in *The Letters to a Young Relative*. Take this little ethical discourse for example:

"When I asked whether you have *received* the bank notes I sent you, I did not mean to *inquire how you had laid them out*. Don't you see the difference? From your not mentioning that they had come to hand (a careless omission; you should break yourself of this habit), and your cousin informing me that she had not received two packets sent by the same mail, I concluded that the notes were probably lost or embezzled. Hence my inquiry after them. No, my son; whatever cash I send you (unless for some special purpose) is yours: you will spend it as you please, and I have nothing to say to it. That you will not employ it in a manner that you ought to be ashamed of, I have

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Oct. 6, 1811, *Id.*, 107.

the fullest confidence. To pry into such affairs would not only betray a want of that confidence, and even a suspicion discreditable to us both, but infringe upon your rights and independence. For, although you are not of an age to be your own master and independent in all your actions, yet you are possessed of rights which it would be tyranny and injustice to withhold or invade. Indeed, this independence, which is so much vaunted, and which young people think consists in doing what they please, when they grow up to man's estate (with as much justice as the poor negro thinks liberty consists in being supported in idleness by other people's labour)—this independence is but a name. Place us where you will; along with our rights there must co-exist correlative duties, and the more exalted the station, the more arduous are these last. Indeed, as the duty is precisely correspondent to the power, it follows that the richer, the wiser, the more powerful a man is, the greater is the obligation upon him to employ his gifts in lessening the sum of human misery; and this employment constitutes happiness, which the weak and wicked vainly imagine to consist in wealth, finery, or sensual gratification. Who so miserable as the bad Emperor of Rome? Who more happy than Trajan and Antoninus? Look at the fretful, peevish, rich man, whose senses are as much jaded by attempting to embrace too much gratification as the limbs of the poor post-horse are by incessant labor. (See the Gentlemen and Basket-makers, and, indeed, the whole of *Sandford and Merton*.)

“Do not, however, undervalue, on that account, the character of the *real* gentleman, which is the most respectable amongst men. It consists not of plate, and equipage, and rich living, any more than in the disease which that mode of life engenders; but in *truth*, courtesy, bravery, generosity, and learning, which last, although not *essential* to it, yet does very much to adorn and illustrate the character of the true gentleman. Tommy Merton's gentlemen were no gentlemen, except in the acceptance of innkeepers (and the *great* vulgar, as well as the small), with whom he, who rides in a coach and six, is three times as great a gentleman as he who drives a post-chaise and pair. Lay down this as a principle, that *Truth* is to the other virtues

what vital air is to the human system. They cannot exist *at all* without it; and, as the body may live under many diseases, if supplied with pure air for its consumption, so may the character survive many defects, where there is a rigid attachment to *Truth*. All *equivocation* and subterfuge belong to falsehood, which consists, not in using *false* words only, but in conveying false impressions, no matter how; and, if a person deceive himself, and I, by my silence, suffer him to remain in that error, I am implicated in the deception, unless he be one who has no right to rely upon me for information, and, in that case, 'tis plain, I could not be instrumental in deceiving him."<sup>1</sup>

Or could anything be smoother than the transition in the following letter from copybook instruction to golden truths of world-wide application:

"Take my advice, my son, and do not attempt a running hand yet. The way to acquire a good running hand, is to begin with a *fair, large, clean-cut, and distinct* character. Children always learn to stand alone, and to walk step by step, before they run. There is another excellent rule, which, if you now adhere to it, will be of great service to you through life: 'Make haste slowly.' Hurry always occasions blunders and delay. When, therefore, you make any mistake, or blot, write all over again, fairly. The labor of doing this will make you careful and correct; and, when the *habit* is formed, the trouble is over. Habit is truly called 'second nature.' To form good habits is almost as easy as to fall into *bad*. What is the difference between an industrious, sober man and an idle drunken one, but their respective habits? 'Tis just as easy for Mr. Harrison to be temperate and active, as 'tis for poor Knowles to be the reverse; with this great difference, that, exclusively of the effects of their respective courses of life on their respectability and fortunes, the exercises of the one are followed by health, pleasure, and peace of mind, whilst those of the other engender *disease, pain, and discontent*; to say nothing of poverty in its most hideous shape, *want*, squalid misery, and the contempt of the world, contrasted with

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 15, 1806, *Id.*, 14.

affluent plenty, a smiling family, and the esteem of all *good men*. Perhaps, you cannot believe that there exists a being who would hesitate which of these two lots to choose. Alas! my son, vice puts on such alluring shapes, indolence is so seducing, that (like the flies in Æsop) we revel whilst the sun shines, and, for a few hours' temporary pleasure, pay the price of perishing miserably in the winter of our old age. The industrious ants are wiser. By a little forbearance at the moment, by setting a just value on the *future*, and disregarding present temptation, they secure an honourable and comfortable asylum. All nature, my son, is a volume, speaking comfort and offering instruction to the good and wise. But 'the fool saith in his heart, "There is no God"'; he shuts his eyes to the great book of Nature that lies open before him. Your fate, my dear Theodorick, is in your own hands. Like Hercules, every young man has his choice between *Pleasure*, falsely so called, and *Infamy*, or laborious Virtue and a fair fame. In old age, indeed, long before, we begin to *feel* the folly or wisdom of our selection. I confidently trust that you, my son, will choose wisely. In seven years from this time, you will repent, or rejoice, at the disposition which you make of the present hour."<sup>1</sup>

It came easy to Randolph to inculcate habits of deliberation because, contrary to the false notions, which are so often entertained of his character, he was never, John Randolph Bryan tells us, in a hurry; though the soul of energy both mentally and physically. Another letter of exhortation is this:

"Remember that *labour is necessary to excellence*. This is an eternal truth, although vanity cannot be brought to believe, or indolence to heed, it. I am deeply interested in seeing you turn out a respectable man, in every point of view; and, as far as I could, have endeavoured to furnish you with the means of acquiring knowledge and correct principles, and manners, at the same time. Self-conceit, and indifference are unfriendly, in an equal degree, to the attainment of knowledge, or the form-

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, March 1, 1806, *Id.*, 17.

ing of an amiable character. The first is more offensive, but does not more completely mar all excellence than the last; and it is truly deplorable that both flourish in Virginia, as if it were their native soil. A petulant arrogance, or supine, listless indifference, marks the character of too many of our young men. They early assume airs of manhood; and these premature men remain children for the rest of their lives. Upon the credit of a smattering of Latin, drinking grog, and chewing tobacco, these striplings set up for legislators and statesmen; and seem to deem it derogatory from their manhood to treat age and experience with any degree of deference. They are loud, boisterous, over-bearing, and dictatorial: profane in speech, low and obscene in their pleasures. In the tavern, the stable, or the gaming-house, they are at home; but, placed in the society of *real* gentlemen and men of letters, they are awkward and uneasy; in all situations, they are contemptible.

“The vanity of excelling in pursuits, where excellence does not imply merit, has been the ruin of many a young man. I should, therefore, be under apprehensions for a young fellow, who danced uncommonly well, and expect more hereafter from his heels than from his head. Alexander, I think, was reproached with singing well, and very justly. He must have misapplied the time which he devoted to the acquisition of so great a proficiency in that art. I once knew a young fellow who was remarkably handsome; he was highly skilled in dancing and fencing, an exceedingly good skater, and one of the most dexterous billiard-players and marksmen that I ever saw. He sang a good song, and was the envy of every foolish fellow, and the darling of every silly girl, who knew him. He was, nevertheless, one of the most ignorant and conceited puppies whom I ever beheld. Yet, it is highly probable, that, if he had not been enamoured of the rare qualities which I have enumerated, he might have made a valuable and estimable man. But he was too entirely gratified with his superficial and worthless accomplishments to bestow a proper cultivation on his mind.”<sup>1</sup>

“A liar is always a coward,” is another homily that Randolph read to Theodore in connection with a long

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Jan. 8, 1807, *Id.*, 25.

pointed discourse on the meanness, misery, and dishonor begotten by debt.<sup>1</sup> One more homily, and we will cease to consider Randolph in the light of a gnostic philosopher:

“One of the best and wisest men I ever knew has often said to me that a decayed family could never recover its loss of rank in the world, until the members of it left off talking and dwelling upon its former opulence. This remark, founded in a long and close observation of mankind, I have seen verified, in numerous instances, in my own connexions; who, to use the words of my oracle, ‘will never thrive, until they can become “poor folks.”’ He added, ‘They make some struggles, and, with apparent success, to recover lost ground; they may, and sometimes do, get half way up again; but they are sure to fall back, unless, reconciling themselves to circumstances, they become in form, as well as in fact, poor folks.’

“The blind pursuit of wealth, for the sake of hoarding, is a species of insanity. There are spirits, and not the least worthy, who, content with an humble mediocrity, leave the field of wealth and ambition open to more active, perhaps more guilty, competitors. Nothing can be more respectable than the independence that grows out of self-denial. The man who, by abridging his wants, can find time to devote to the cultivation of his mind, or the aid of his fellow-creatures, is a being far above the plodding sons of industry and gain. His is a spirit of the noblest order. But what shall we say to the drone, whom society is eager to ‘shake from her encumbered lap’?; who lounges from place to place, and spends more time in ‘Adonizing’ his person, even in a morning, than would serve to earn his breakfast? who is curious in his living, a connoisseur in wines, fastidious in his cookery; but who never knew the luxury of earning a single meal? Such a creature, ‘sponging’ from house to house, and always on the borrow, may yet be found in Virginia. One more generation will, I trust, put an end to them; and their posterity, if they have any, must work or steal, *directly*.

“Men are like nations. One founds a family, the other an empire—both destined, sooner or later, to decay. This is the

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, Oct. 6, 1807, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 39.



way in which ability manifests itself. They who belong to a higher order, like Newton, and Milton, and Shakespeare, leave an imperishable name. I have no quarrel with such as are content with their original obscurity, vegetate on from father to son; 'whose ignoble blood has crept through *clodpoles* ever since the flood'; but I cannot respect them. He who contentedly eats the bread of idleness and dependence is beneath contempt. I know not why I have run out at this rate. Perhaps, it arises from a passage in your letter. I cannot but think you are greatly deceived. I do not believe the world to be so little clear-sighted.

"What the 'covert insinuations' against you, on your arrival at Richmond, were, I am at a loss to divine. I never heard the slightest disparagement of your moral character; and I know nobody less obnoxious to such imputations."<sup>1</sup>

In the preface to *The Letters to a Young Relative*, Dr. Dudley tells us that his sentiment of filial devotion to Randolph for many years constituted a large portion of his moral existence. Alas! that such a relationship should have become but a part of the mere *lachrymæ rerum*. How the blame for this fact should be apportioned between the two, we, at least, shall not undertake to say; for what judge can ever sum up all that is to be said on each side of a family estrangement of this kind? Even before Aug., 1818, there are hints in Randolph's letters to Dr. Dudley that the latter was of a moody disposition; but it is a letter, written to Dr. Dudley in August, 1818, that bares to our eye for the first time the rift which this disposition, conspiring with the excesses of temper, produced in Randolph by the spell of mental derangement through which he had recently passed, had made. Randolph's letter was in these words:

"I consider myself under obligations to you that I can never repay. I have considered you as a blessing sent to me by Providence, in my old age, to repay the desertion of my

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Dec. 30, 1821, *Id.*, 232.



other friends and nearer connexions. It is in your power (if you please) to repay me all the debt of gratitude that you insist upon being due to me; although I consider myself, in a pecuniary point of view, largely a gainer by our connexion. But, if you are unwilling to do so, I must be content to give up my last stay upon earth; for I shall, in that case, send the boys to their parents. Without you, I cannot live here at all, and will not. What it is that has occasioned the change in your manner towards me, I am unable to discover. I have ascribed it to the disease by which you are afflicted, and which affects the mind and temper as well as the animal faculties. In your principles I have as unbounded confidence as I have in those of any man on earth. Your disinterestedness, integrity, and truth, would extort my esteem and respect, even if I were disposed to withhold them. I love you as my own son; would to God you were. I see, I think, into your heart; mine is open before you, if you will look into it. Nothing could ever eradicate this affection, which surpasses that of any other person (as I believe) on earth. Your parents have other children: I have only you. But I see you wearing out your time, and wasting away, in this desert, where you have no society such as your time of life, habits and taste require. I have looked at you often, engaged in contributing to my advantage and comfort, with tears in my eyes, although I was selfish and cruel in sacrificing you to my interest. I am going from home: will you take care of my affairs until I return?—I ask it as a favor. It is possible that we may not meet again; but, if I get more seriously sick at the springs than I am now, I will send for you, unless you will go with me to the White Sulphur Springs. Wherever I am, my heart will love you as long as it beats. From your boyhood, I have not been lavish of reproof upon you. Recollect my past life.”<sup>1</sup>

When this letter was published in *The Letters to a Young Relative*, Dr. Dudley added to it this terrible footnote:

“This letter was written during a lucid interval of alienation of mind; which, for the first time, amounted to positive

<sup>1</sup> Aug., 1818, *Id.*, 203.

delirium. Fits of caprice and petulance, following days of deepest gloom, had, for years previously, overshadowed his mind; evincing the existence of some corroding care, for which he neither sought, nor would receive, any sympathy.

“For many weeks, his conduct towards myself, who was the only inmate of his household, had been marked by contumelious indignities, which it required almost heroic patience to endure; even when aided by a warm and affectionate devotion, and an anxious wish to alleviate the agonies of such a mind in ruins. All hope of attaining this end finally failed; and, when he found that I would no longer remain with him, the above letter was written; it is almost needless to say, with what effect. I remained with him two years longer.

“The truth and beauty of the eastern allegory, of the man, endowed with two souls, was never more forcibly exemplified than in his case. In his dark days, when the evil genius predominated, the austere vindictiveness of his feelings towards those that a distempered fancy depicted as enemies, or as delinquent in truth or honour, was horribly severe and remorseless.

“Under such circumstances of mental alienation, I sincerely believe (if it may not appear irreverent) that, had our blessed Savior, accompanied by his Holy Mother, condescended to become again incarnate, revisited the earth, and been domiciliated with him one week, he would have imagined the former a rogue, and the latter no better than she should be.

“On the contrary, when the benevolent genius had the ascendant, no one ever knew better how to feel and express the tenderest kindness, or to evince, in countenance and manner, gentler benevolence of heart.”<sup>1</sup> (a)

When Dr. Dudley left Roanoke in February, 1820,<sup>2</sup> it was to enter upon the practice of medicine in Richmond. Later on, hearing that he thought of leaving Virginia, Randolph wrote to him:

<sup>1</sup> *Id.* (note).

<sup>2</sup> Deposition of Dr. Dudley, Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor., Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

“I hope you will not leave Virginia, and, above all, for a climate the most noxious to your particular habit. My heart gushes over towards you. To establish yourself in your profession, where you are, requires only a little time and patience. You are surrounded by respectable persons, to whom you are known, and by whom you are respected, with whom you can associate on terms of equality and freedom. This is no light advantage, not to be given up but upon the most cogent considerations. The cloud that overhangs Richmond will pass away. Meanwhile, consider me your banker, and, if your pride revolt at the obligation, I will consent to reimbursement out of the first fruits of your practice; but it ought not so to revolt because it will wound the already bruised.”<sup>1</sup>

The last letter in *The Letters to a Young Relative* is dated Feb. 11, 1822. It was preceded six days before by another in which Randolph, after telling Dr. Dudley that he had never received a letter from him that had gratified him more than the one which he acknowledged, said characteristically: “Your medical advice is very thankfully received and will be followed . . . so far as my own experience does not run counter to it.”<sup>2</sup>

In the Randolph will litigation, Dr. Dudley testified that the first attack observed by him which clearly indicated mental derangement on Randolph's part had occurred during the summer of 1818; that, about 12 months before this time, Randolph had told him that he was conscious that his intellect was disordered on the subject of an early love affair, and that he knew that he had alienated almost all of his nearest friends by his unhappy temper; and that, during the first violent paroxysm of Randolph's insanity, which lasted nearly all of the summer of 1818, and afterwards returned, Randolph was guilty of the wildest extravagance; such as rising at midnight and imagining that his neighbors were committing

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Dec. 14, 1820, *Id.*, 227.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Feb. 5, 1822, *Id.*, 250.

trespasses on his land; cutting down line trees, etc. Dr. Dudley also testified that the paternal interest of Randolph in his welfare continued until the spring of 1822, when all intercourse between them ceased, and that, from that time on, whenever an opportunity arose, he displayed the deepest malignity of feeling toward him; on one occasion even writing him "a most insolent letter," demanding payment for certain articles which he had given him. In his deposition, however, Dr. Dudley also stated that in his opinion there had never been a time, after the attack of 1818, when Randolph had been capable of making a valid will. He also bore witness to the complete change in all his ordinary traits of character which Randolph underwent when subject to a fit of mental disorder.<sup>1</sup>

Randolph's relations to Theodoric Tudor Randolph were closely similar to his relations to Dr. Dudley, when the latter was of the same age. Describing in a letter to Nicholson the serious illness which befell Tudor when he was a boy, he says: "Before he was bled, he never closed an eye, but lay patiently mute, taking without reluctance everything that was offered him and baring his little arm for the lancet. Never did I see more composed fortitude."<sup>2</sup> "My son is better," he tells Nicholson in his next letter.<sup>3</sup>

Until Tudor was 9 years old, he had never had any other tutor than his uncle.<sup>4</sup> When he was approaching his tenth year, Randolph informed Nicholson that the boy was making good progress in *Cæsar*.<sup>5</sup> Tudor was afterwards placed with Theodore Dudley at a school in Richmond, which was conducted by a Dr. Haller; and subsequently he was also for a time under the tuition of Dr.

<sup>1</sup> Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor., Cl'k's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>2</sup> Bizarre, Mar. 17, 1805, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>3</sup> Petersburg, Apr. 6, 1805, *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Bizarre, Aug. 27, 1804, *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Bizarre, Aug. 27, 1804, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

John H. Rice, at the home of the latter in Prince Edward County; but, throughout Tudor's brief life, Randolph had such a free hand in the formation of his character and intellect that he was in the habit of saying with no little justice that Tudor was a creature entirely of his own creation. Once in a letter to his friend Mr. Parish, of Philadelphia, he said: "Permit me to introduce to you my nephew—let the father say my son—for he has known no other father and is the child of my heart and of my adoption—Mr. Tudor Randolph."<sup>1</sup>

His pet name for Tudor as a boy was "Buona." The boy soon gave proof of the extraordinary talents that caused Randolph to say after his death that he was the most gifted human being that he had ever known.<sup>2</sup> When he was at school in Richmond, his uncle described him in these pointed terms in a letter to Nicholson:

"He promises to possess all his father's genius. He can not have a better. All my solicitude is on the subject of his character. I have no fears upon the subject of literary accomplishments. His acquirements in that way are made too easily and with too much pleasure to himself not to be ample. All my dread is that his temper may prove too soft—so as to give to his inferiors in other respects an ascendant over him. The boy is no coward—far from it; but he is meekness itself, overflowing with the milk of human kindness. This would do admirably for Robinson Crusoe's Island or the Golden Age, or even for a Moravian Brotherhood, but it will not suit these times. This, as Mr. Talleyrand has shrewdly remarked, is the age of upstarts, and you must take your choice to crush them or be crushed by them. I shall, therefore, make it my study to put buckram into this fellow in due time—or (as our friend Bryan would not unpoetically say) tip him with a touch of the torch of Prometheus."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, June 18, 1812, Beverley D. Tucker MSS.

<sup>2</sup> J. C. Grinnan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> J. R. to Nicholson, Bizarre, Oct. 24, 1806, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

The letters contained in *The Letters to a Young Relative*, are in some instances addressed to Tudor as well as Theodore, and in the collection there are a number of references to the former. On one occasion, Randolph asks Theodore what could have induced Buona to spell "watch" "wacth."<sup>1</sup> On another he conveys through Theodore a reproof to Buona for writing "a *tolerable* long letter," instead of "a *tolerably* long letter."<sup>2</sup> In the same letter, he says that, if Buona had been describing Richmond to his mother or himself, he would never have introduced it with: "I beg leave to wait upon you"; an awkward exordium which even Mr. Expectation, of Norfolk, would not approve. "I wish you were with me, my sons, to enjoy the sport," Randolph says in conclusion. "Your skill, my dear Theodore, would make amends for my clumsiness, and dear Buona would hold Miniken, who now runs away from uncle whenever she has an opportunity."<sup>3</sup> This was when Tudor was eleven years old. Later, in a letter to Theodore, Randolph expressed the hope that even Buona would soon come to beat him on the wing. "Give my love to him. I long to see his rosy cheeks," the letter adds.<sup>4</sup> Over and over again, evidence is brought to our attention in Randolph's letters that Tudor, like Theodore, was frequently the beneficiary of a degree of pecuniary generosity on Randolph's part which we should hardly expect anyone but a father to exhibit.

After Randolph moved from Bizarre to Roanoke, Tudor and his brother St. George were frequently companions of Randolph there. For instance, under date of July 17, 1811, when Tudor was in his fifteenth year, the Diary contains this entry: "Tudor arrives in evening from Bizarre with Fidget and Beauty." There is also this

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, Jul. 24, 1806, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Sept. 11, 1806, *Id.*, 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Georgetown, Nov. 27, 1807, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 42.

amusing reference to Tudor in the *School-boy Reminiscences of John Randolph*, by Wm. H. Elliott:

“Mr. Randolph would sometimes unbend himself in small talk with little boys, but not often. On one occasion, C. C., [Carter Coupland] a distant relation of Mr. Randolph, accompanied Tudor and myself on a visit to Roanoke. At the close of a long summer's day, after having hunted squirrels, climbed trees, swam in the river, and played marbles to satiety, we composed ourselves to rest, all in the same apartment—we three boys on a pallet of liberal dimensions, spread upon the floor, Mr. Randolph on a bed to himself, where, stretched out at full length, and, covered by a single sheet, he looked like a pair of oyster tongs. He had a book and a candle by him reading. At length, he dropped the book, looked up at the ceiling, and commenced thus: ‘Boys! why may not the earth be an animal?’ Our researches into natural history did not enable us to advance any striking hypothesis on such a subject. All continued perfectly silent. Mr. Randolph no doubt did not expect any ingenious suggestion in support of his theory, but asked the question merely for the purpose of introducing his own fanciful strain of remarks. He resumed: ‘Now the ocean may be regarded as the heart or great receptacle of the blood, the rivers are the veins and arteries, the rocks are the bones.’ Here C. C., being a sprightly youth, whispered in my ear, ‘There is not much marrow in them bones.’ This sally well-nigh cost me an irreverent chuckle. ‘The trees are the hair of this animal, and men and other vermin inhabit these hairs. If we dig a hole in the earth, or wound it in any way, we find that it has a tendency to heal up.’ Tudor, who was a corpulent youth, and overcome by the exercises of the day, commenced snoring. Randolph's quick ear caught the sound, he turned his head in our direction, his eyes flashed indignation: ‘Is that beef-headed fellow asleep already?’; but, as he received no further response than a confirmatory snort from the same quarter, he extinguished his candle with an impatient gesture, wheeled himself over towards the wall, and seemed to seek in sleep an oblivion of his disgust.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 79.



Of Tudor, when he was a pupil at Dr. Rice's, we have but few details, beyond the fact that Dr. Rice hoped to make a clergyman of him<sup>1</sup>; warned him when he was leaving Virginia for Harvard against contracting a disgust for his native State,<sup>2</sup> and referred to him in a letter to Judith, whom he had won over from the Episcopal to the Presbyterian Church, as "our dear boy."<sup>3</sup>

At Harvard, Tudor acquired a standing which spoke well not only for his own natural genius, but for the thoroughness of the education which a boy could receive in his day in Southside Virginia, despite the unfavorable opinion which Henry Adams formed of its inhabitants.

"He was a lad of fine abilities," Josiah Quincy, Jr., declares, "and sufficiently attentive to his studies to take rank among the foremost in his class. Unhappily, his health failed towards the end of his college life, and he died in England before the class graduated; but the corporation nevertheless gave him his degree, and his name appears regularly in the triennial catalogue. My father had a general oversight of young Randolph and the charge of his money matters."<sup>4</sup>

In appearance, Edmund Quincy tells us that Tudor was a tall, swarthy youth with a good deal in his looks that seemed to justify his claim to a descent from Pocahontas and Powhatan.

A still more flattering account of the youth was given by John G. Palfrey, the New England historian, in a letter to Jared Sparks:

"Randolph, a nephew and heir of the celebrated John Randolph, has just come here from Virginia, and is studying with Mr. Everett. He did mean to enter our class, but Everett has advised him, and I believe he now intends, to enter junior

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Rev. Jno. H. Rice*, by Wm. Maxwell, 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 94.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoir of Dr. Jno. Holt Rice*, by Maxwell, 118.

<sup>4</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 267.



next commencement. He is a very smart fellow, very studious and has read almost all the Greek and Latin that was ever written. He has been here only a week, and, in that time, has been over Minora and the Testament, which he never studied before. He has been over none of the freshman or sophomore studies—*Livy* and *Horace*—except part of the mathematics, some of the authors from which there are selections in *Excerpta* and *Græca Majora*, and four books of *Euclid*. He intends to review all the studies required to enter, and has apportioned his time so as to allow only 8 days to Locke and Logic! I hope, however, he will be discouraged and enter our class; for he would be an honor to it.”<sup>1</sup>

A later letter—one from Charles Folsom to Jared Sparks—told Sparks that a third person had seen Tudor in London very much emaciated, pale, and enfeebled in body and voice; that he had just returned from Cheltenham Springs from which he thought that he had derived some benefit, but that he was manifestly past recovery, and connected with the world by hope only.<sup>2</sup> After the death of Tudor, a third friend of Sparks wrote of him to Sparks in these measured but generous terms:

“You have heard, doubtless, of Randolph’s death. He was never very friendly to me, but the grave should conceal the feelings as soon as it buries the virtues of our associates in oblivion. His character was very peculiar, but we have every reason to believe that he would have been a great man.”<sup>3</sup>

The judgment of Tudor, formed by Sparks himself, is hardly less favorable. “Taken all in all, he was one of the most promising, perhaps, the most promising, young man who has been at Cambridge within my knowledge of the institution. I was very warmly attached to him.”<sup>4</sup>

As usual, Randolph had formed a correct estimate of

<sup>1</sup> July 7, 1812, *Life, &c., of Jared Sparks*, by Herbert B. Adams, v. 1, 70.

<sup>2</sup> Oct. 20, 1815, *Id.*, 71 (note).

<sup>3</sup> Wm. H. Elliott, to Jared Sparks, Nov. 15, 1815, *Id.*, 71 (note).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, v. 2, 461.

intellectual capacity. He did not often trouble himself about the valuation placed upon his speeches by others, but, after Tudor's death, he wrote to Judith:

“I have a request . . . to make of you. It is to furnish me, after you shall have read them, with all the letters from me to Tudor in your possession, and with one of his to you, of which I am the subject. You gave it to me or sent it to me last year (1814) and it contains this expression: ‘Surely, my uncle “spake as never man spake.” ’ ”

In an earlier letter to David Parish, Randolph said: "I shall embark for England in the spring, and spend the summer at Cheltenham, where is lodged in the bosom of the earth the treasure of my heart."<sup>2</sup>

Over the grave at Cheltenham, he caused a stone to be placed with an inscription, stating that Tudor had fallen a victim to the consequences of intense study, which had obliged him to leave his college about 12 months before his decease, and that, in testimony of his merit as a scholar, the corporation of the University of Harvard had conferred on him the degree of Bachelor of Arts, at their annual commencement, held on August 30, 1815; ignorant that he was then removed beyond the sphere of human censure or human applause.<sup>3</sup> (a)

Peculiarly tender were Randolph's relations to John St. George Randolph, Tudor's elder brother, who was born deaf and dumb, and died after many years of hopeless insanity. If anyone doubts that Randolph was turtle-dove as well as falcon, all that he has to do is to make himself familiar with the infinite love and compassion that he heaped upon this unfortunate youth. At Bizarre, St. George grew up immediately under the eye of his uncle, and, after the latter had removed to Roanoke, he fre-

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Jan. 20, 1816, Grinnan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Feb. 3, 1816.

### 3 J. R.'s Diary.

quently passed to and fro between Bizarre and Roanoke. Though too deaf to hear the whirr of a partridge's wings, and too dumb to utter a command to a pointer, he achieved the highest ambition of a Southside Virginia boy of his day; except that of making an eloquent speech, namely, that of being a good shot on the wing. On one occasion, he wrote to his uncle that he had killed 5 partridges and a hare at 8 shots.<sup>1</sup> Whole or maimed, it was to that and better that every Southside lad of his age aspired in the stubble field.

In his desire to give St. George the best education that one in his condition was capable of receiving, Randolph sent him abroad in 1805 to take a course of instruction, first, at Braidwood's, at Harkney, near London, and then at Sicard's, near Paris. "I am here that I may see the last of my poor boy," he wrote to St. George Tucker from Baltimore. "He leaves me tomorrow for England."<sup>2</sup> Everything that money could do to promote the improvement of the boy, while he was abroad, Randolph saw that money did; and, throughout his entire correspondence with Monroe, who, with his family, was, to some extent, Randolph's proxy in the care of St. George, when the latter was in England, there are expressions of the eagerest solicitude about the boy's welfare. "Poor dear unfortunate boy"<sup>3</sup>; "My unhappy boy"<sup>4</sup>; "That dear, interesting boy,"<sup>5</sup> are some of the caressing terms that Randolph employs about St. George in his letters to Monroe. To Monroe and the members of his family Randolph's heart overflowed, as it was wont to do in requital for any real service to him, in words of the warmest acknowledgment, for their kindness to his nephew. It would seem, however,

<sup>1</sup> Farmville, Jan. 8, 1813, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Dec. 17, 1805, Lucas MSS.

<sup>3</sup> *Monroe Papers*, v. 9, 1360, Libr. Cong.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Mch. 26, 1808, *Monroe Papers*, v. 12, 1543, Libr. Cong.

that St. George derived but little benefit from his schooling abroad; for, in one of his letters to Dr. Dudley, after the young man's return, Randolph says that of late St. George's letters to him had been hardly intelligible.<sup>1</sup> "I fear he will lose the faculty of expressing his thoughts on paper if no one takes the trouble to correct him," Randolph observed. "Alas! 'prayers are not *morality*,' nor 'kneeling *religion*.'" <sup>2</sup> (a) Some of the poor boy's unintelligible letters to his uncle, all breathing a spirit of the most devoted affection for him, have survived. In one of them, speaking of Randolph's servant, Jupiter, he says: "I fear it would trouble you to tell you that Jupiter clothes are worn out now but it will be mended well I hope." However, when these jumbled words are read, a smile does not light up the face so readily as it would do if St. George had not already expressed in the same letter the great pleasure afforded him by his uncle's letters, and declared: "It delighted me very much, my dear uncle, that you remember me as tenderly as if you were my father."<sup>3</sup> "This county has none the gold rings. I wish you to get one for me in Richmond, if you please," is another fumbling sentence which he wrote to his uncle; doubtless at a time when he thought that he was about to be married.<sup>4</sup>

Randolph, it seems, was desirous that the young man should marry. (b) This fact comes out in a letter from Judith to Randolph, written at a time when St. George's affections were fixed upon a definite object—his cousin, Jane Hackley, the daughter of his mother's sister Harriet, the wife of Richard S. Hackley, who was for a time the American Consul at San Lucar, Spain.<sup>5</sup> "You have always encouraged the idea of St. George forming a matrimonial connection at a proper age," she said.

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 18, 1812, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 131.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Bizarre, Jan. 20, 1813, Bryan MSS.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Apr. 19, 1814, Bryan MSS.

<sup>5</sup> Bryan MSS.

“While I ever believed that it was extremely improbable that he would find a woman worthy of him, disposed to submit to the inconveniences arising from his misfortune, to me it would be the most desirable event I could witness; but my most sanguine hopes have never aspired to so much happiness. May Heaven in its mercy protect and bless my child! All I can do to promote his interest and comfort shall be done while I live, and I endeavor to fortify his mind with those genuine principles of Christian piety which alone can teach him (in my opinion) patience and forbearance. He is cheerful and contented, I hope, although he has recently experienced a disappointment in his wish to gain the affections of a very amiable, exemplary girl, but one destitute of every personal charm whatever—I mean Jane Hackley.”<sup>1</sup>

So far as we are aware, only one letter from Randolph to St. George is extant. It was written the year before the boy was sent to England:

“I came back from Alexandria this morning quite dispirited at parting from you,” it said, “and have felt solitary and deserted ever since. My room seems quite forlorn now you have deserted it, and several times I have been on the point of asking where you were when I recollected myself. Mr. Brent sent you a note to come and dine with him today. He is father of George Brent. The stage driver, of whom I inquired, told me that he met the curricule near Mrs. Washington’s, so that you must have reached Colchester before dark. I wish the bridge had been mended, and then you would have been saved a cold time of it in the boat. How unlucky that we could not get a great-coat for you! God bless you my dearest son. Write to your fond uncle who loves you inexpressibly. Two months will soon pass away, and then your expedition to London shall be deferred no longer. Again, my dear boy, adieu!”<sup>2</sup>

The Diary records the circumstances under which the first knowledge of St. George’s insanity was received by

<sup>1</sup> July 24, 1813, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Dec. 25, 1804, Wm. Leigh, Jr., MSS.

Randolph. When it reached him, he was still lingering in Richmond, after having spent the winter of 1813-1814 there so delightfully. This is the entry: "1814, May 10. Tuesd. Rec'd Judith's letter, announcing St. George's insanity. Set out immediately for Mrs. Tabb's that night—next day to Farmville." About two weeks later, Randolph took St. George to his own home at Roanoke from Farmville, where Judith resided for a while after the destruction of her home at Bizarre; and, from this time on, there are frequent references to St. George in Randolph's letters to his friends.

"My eldest nephew, St. George," he wrote to Francis Scott Key, "in consequence of an unsuccessful attachment to Miss —, the daughter of a worthy neighbor of his mother, had become unsettled in his intellects, and, on my arrival at Farmville, I found him a frantic maniac. I have brought him up here and Dr. Dudley, a friend and treasure to me above all price, assists me in the management of him. We have no hopes of his restoration."<sup>1</sup>

In a letter to Key written eleven days later, Randolph told Key that St. George had made several attempts to marry, and that, brooding over the cause of his failure, had reduced him to his present state.<sup>2</sup>

When this letter was written, St. George had been taken back to Farmville, but had been again shifted from Farmville to Roanoke, because, as Randolph intimated in his letter, he had become incurably alienated from his mother.

The exact mental condition of St. George is clearly stated by Randolph in a letter which he wrote the next day to Dr. Brockenbrough.

"Poor St. George continues quite irrational," he said. "He is, however, very little mischievous, and governed pretty easily. His memory of persons, things, words and events is

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, June 3, 1814, Garland, v. 2, 39.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Jul. 14, 1814, *Id.*, 40.

not at all impaired, but he has no power of combination, and is entirely incoherent."<sup>1</sup>

Later, St. George was confined in an insane asylum at Philadelphia, and, afterwards, he was confined in one at or near Baltimore. In 1817, Henry St. George Tucker went to see him at Philadelphia, and, reporting what he saw to Dr. Dudley, Randolph said: "He went with Ryland to see St. George, and was surprised to find his madness of so bad a type. He tears everything to tatters that he lays his hands on. He recognized his uncle at once but the moody expression of his countenance indicated in Harry's opinion, incurable insanity."<sup>2</sup> Nothing can be more pathetic than the language in which Randolph spoke of St. George, after the latter had lost his reason: "Poor St. George, ill-starred, unfortunate boy!" he wrote to Theodore,— "His destiny was sealed before his birth or conception. Take care of yourself; you are my last stay."<sup>3</sup> These words were written from Morrisania in 1814, after the sight of poor Tudor's consumptive face there, and the approaching extinction of all hopes of further descent from his father had awakened in him the feelings which afterwards caused him to exclaim in words, partly borrowed from the famous speech of the Indian Chief, Logan, that there remained not a drop of Logan's blood, except St. George, "the most bereaved and pitiable of the stepsons of nature."<sup>4</sup> Even before Randolph visited Morrisania, however, the ruin, in which his whole family line was being involved, had become plain to him. Writing to Key from Roanoke on July 31, 1814, he penned these harrowing words:

"Affliction has assailed me in a new shape. My younger nephew, whom you saw in Georgetown a few years ago, has

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Jul. 15, 1814, *Id.*, 41.

<sup>2</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 23, 1817, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 196.

<sup>3</sup> Morrisania, Oct. 23, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 163.

<sup>4</sup> Garland, v. 1, 70.

fallen, I fear, into a confirmed pulmonary consumption. He was the pride, the sole hope of our family. How shall I announce to his wretched mother that the last stay of her widowed life is falling? Give me some comfort, my good friend, I beseech you. He is now travelling by slow journeys home. What a scene awaits him there! His birthplace in ashes; his mother worn to a skeleton with disease and grief; his brother cut off from all that distinguishes man to his advantage from the brute beast. I do assure you that my own reason has staggered under this cruel blow. I know, or rather have a confused conception of what I ought to do, and sometimes strive, not altogether ineffectually I hope, to do it. But again all is chaos and misery."<sup>1</sup>

Some of the letters written by Judith to Randolph when St. George was at Roanoke in a demented condition have been preserved, and they are indicative of both a strong intellect and a lofty spirit. After St. George had been absent from her for about a month, she wrote these affecting words to Randolph:

“MY DEAR BROTHER: As there seems little probability that change of scene will produce any permanent benefit to my unhappy child, I would wish to know whether you suppose it could be any disadvantage to him to have him removed to Bizarre, where, in a few weeks, I can have a very comfortable room fitted up for myself. You say that you think the negroes can restrain St. George sufficiently, and that he shows no disposition to injure persons or animals. If so, there is no reason why you should suffer exclusively the melancholy sight which it is my duty and my inclination to relieve you from. At this place, he cannot be kept; the vicinity of the highroad; the tavern opposite, which is now continually visited by strangers, together with the excessive heat and sun in this house, would destroy him. In his own little apartment at Bizarre, he could be very comfortable; it is so well shaded. Oh! had we never quitted that spot, desolate as it now is! my child would never have lost his reason! A more guileless, innocent and happy

<sup>1</sup> *Id.*, v. 2, 43.



creature I believe never existed than he, until that fatal calamity which sent us forth houseless."<sup>1</sup>

In response to this letter, St. George was a week or so later taken to Farmville; but three days afterwards, for some reason, he was taken back to Roanoke.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, his condition improved for a time, because in one of Randolph's briefer journals, under date of Nov. 18, 1816, it is stated that St. George had relapsed. About two weeks later, after being bled, he was taken to the asylum at Philadelphia; Randolph, who was in Richmond, when he reached that City, noting in the journal just mentioned, under date of Dec. 2, 1816, that he had slept with the poor fellow the night before.

Among the letters from Judith to Randolph, in regard to St. George, when he was at Roanoke, is one in which she thanks him for giving her every week accurate intelligence about her son. "May the mercy of Heaven be extended to my beloved child," she concludes. "Excuse me, my dear brother, these idle and impertinent wanderings. May God bless you."<sup>3</sup> But the most noteworthy of all the letters is one upon the back of which we can still trace a diligent effort by Randolph to converse with his deaf and dumb nephew. The words, scribbled by St. George, are entirely irrational, and, so far as they are intelligible at all, betray a delusion upon his part that Randolph was about to be put in prison by the people of Cumberland County; which Randolph endeavored to dissipate by his written replies. The strange conversation opens with these words: "I am glad to see you so much better these two days, my dear nephew. I love you much."<sup>4</sup>

St. George died at an advanced age, after being taken under the roof of his committee, Wyatt Cardwell, at

<sup>1</sup> Farmville, June 28, 1814, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>3</sup> Farmville, June 14, 1814, Bryan MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Bryan MSS.

Charlotte Court House, and his estate, so far as made up of what he received from the compromise in the Randolph will litigation, was distributed, in the proportion of one-half, among his paternal, and, in the proportion of one-half, among his maternal, kindred. A description of him, as he was in 1856, a few years before his death, when he was at large at Charlotte Court House, and a harmless lunatic, has been recently given to us by Marion Harland in her *Autobiography*. He was then a man of venerable appearance, with a full white beard, but his figure, which was above the medium height, was still "erect as a Virginia Pine." He planted his feet straight forward, like an Indian, as he walked, his hair was snow-white, his eyebrows were black, his eyes were dark and piercing, and his features were finely chiselled.<sup>1</sup> He had his own riding horse, he read and apparently enjoyed Latin and French, as well as English, books, and retained a distinct recollection of his famous uncle and of the politics of his day.<sup>2</sup> (a)

Indeed, Randolph seems to have felt a deep sympathy in every respect with what he calls in one of his letters to his niece "the freshness of unhackneyed youth."<sup>3</sup> Bouldin tells an interesting story of the kindly manner in which he relieved the despondency of a sensible and meritorious young man, who had begun the study of one of the learned professions, by assuring him repeatedly that he had nothing to fear; that he had the requisite qualifications for success in his chosen calling, and that all he had to do was to persevere, as several men of his acquaintance that he mentioned had done, who, without splendid abilities, had, solely by their industry and persistency, won good positions for themselves in life.<sup>4</sup>

More definite is this beautiful tribute paid to Randolph by the Rev. John T. Clark in the reminiscences which we

<sup>1</sup> P. 320.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 322.

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 29, 1822, Bryan MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Bouldin, 75.

have already quoted in connection with Randolph's views on the subject of slavery:

"At the conclusion of the War, he returned to his old political associates, while my father continued to the end of his life a zealous and consistent Federalist. After my father's death, Mr. Randolph was very kind and considerate of my mother's situation and feelings, often sending her in the most delicate way some little rarity like fish, or fruit or preserves, and asking in return some little favor; and, from his knowledge of her character and habits, he always asked something which he knew she would be glad to send, and which, from her reputation as an elegant housewife, he knew also would come to him with the nicest and most tempting preparation; in this way, he made the interchange light and pleasant to both. But these attentions, as well as his visits had gradually become less and less frequent, so that when I came home from school to live, although kind feelings existed, there was but little intercourse between the families. It was therefore, with some surprise that one morning (when it was well understood among my associates that I had determined to prepare myself for the Christian Ministry in the Episcopal Church, and, whether I held out or not, I was not diligently engaged in my Theological studies) I received a small package of religious books from Mr. Randolph, with a cordial invitation to come to see him. This I did immediately, and, when I reached his house, I met with the most hearty reception, and found that the reason he had sent for me was, he had heard of my purpose to 'take Orders,' as he always spoke of my entering the ministry, and to encourage me in thus doing so, and to give me his advice as to my studies and course of reading. I can say with truth that this was the first encouragement I received from anyone to persevere in my purpose; the first kind and hearty word that had been spoken to me in an unhesitating, unequivocal tone and manner, that held out to me the prospect of honor or usefulness, or distinction in the course I wished to follow. The nearest thing to encouragement, that had ever before this been said to me, was the assertion that I was sincere in my purpose, although it was doubtful as to my being more useful in the Clerical Calling

than as a wealthy layman in the Church; and that I could injure no one, and could give no one cause of complaint, unless it were to my own family, and that only on the ground of injury to my estate; but Mr. Randolph's encouragement, and his approbation of my course was warm and eloquent; he took me through his library, and pointed out his favorite authors; at the same time making remarks and criticisms on them; occasionally reading, particularly from Milton, or quoting from memory favorite passages from South and Burke. After going through his library in this way, he then offered me the use of any book he had, and urged upon me the acceptance, as a present, of several valuable Theological works; saying that he was now old, and they would be of no more use to him, and telling me how valuable they would be to me. Before my visit was over, he became so much interested, and his religious feelings were so much aroused, that he took down a Prayer Book and, both of us taking seats, he read the Litany. At many of the petitions, he would pause, and making [comments] on them, he would direct me how to read them, and point out their beauty or appropriateness or solemnity. On one petition, in particular 'By thine agony and bloody sweat; by thy cross and passion; by thy precious death and burial; by thy glorious resurrection and ascension; and by the Coming of the Holy Ghost, Good Lord deliver us'; he commented at much length; telling in his own emphatic language—the '*ardentia verba*,' which he said himself was eloquence—how this wonderful petition always affected him. While it lifted his heart and thoughts to heaven, yet, with what solemn, and almost terrific, feelings it filled his mind, when he thus called over in prayer to God the account of our Saviour's sufferings for us. In this way, we spent nearly the entire day; and, before parting, he reminded me the 'Old Church' needed propping, and that I could do it; and the reader can easily understand how a young man would feel at such encouragement and advice from one so capable of giving them. From that time, for the two short years that he lived, whenever he was at Roanoke, his house was always open to me; his library at my command; and he ever ready to talk with me, and to encourage and advise. Never did he say an unkind word to me, but, on the contrary, everything he

said to me, either when we were alone together, or in company, was kind and encouraging, and oftentimes most complimentary. So that whatever others may say of him, or whatever may have been his faults to others, I have no feelings towards him but of kindness and reverence; and, when I heard of his death, I felt that I had lost a friend. And, if I have been of service to the Church of God, or, if I have won any Souls to Christ, and I think without vanity I can say I have, no one gave me so early, so decided, or such intelligent encouragement to dedicate myself to God in the ministry of his Church, as did John Randolph of Roanoke.”<sup>1</sup>

The same kindly characteristics came out the afternoon before Randolph’s death in an interview between him and Dr. Ethelbert Algernon Coleman. These are the words in which this interview is recalled in the Doctor’s Diary:

“On hearing the name on my card, he had me sent for, spoke very affectionately to me, enquired about my family and his horse-tooth instruments, [that he had asked Dr. Coleman to have sharpened for him] and, particularly, whether Sister M. was about to be married, and whether Brother John was to meet me in Baltimore. He asked me to call, whenever at leisure, and said he was dying. But, before I saw him again, he was dead. His temper was particularly mild and even; and the Landlord said that not more than  $\frac{1}{4}$  hour before he died, on understanding that a young man of his acquaintance had been refused a sight, he called for paper and pencil to write him an apology. The writing was at first proper and rational in its contents, but, towards its end, which could only have occurred a very few moments before the catastrophe, it ran into rather a loop concerning the pedigree of some one of his horses.”

Among the letters of affectionate counsel, written by Randolph, are two to his relation, Richard Ryland Randolph, when the latter was a medical student at Philadelphia. “Go on, my young friend,” he tells Ryland in one

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin MSS.



**FRANCES BLAND TUCKER**

**Half Sister of John Randolph, and wife of Judge Jno. Coalter.**



of these letters, "and may God prosper your laudable endeavors to be worthy of the excellent father and friend whom we both deplore."<sup>1</sup> And then, after some words of sound advice, he says in the same letter:

"There is a struggle in the life of every young man, with very few exceptions, from 16 to 22 whether he shall turn out a gentleman or a blackguard. On this score, I have no fears for you whose father was a gentleman (his example you have had before you until within a few months past) and whose ancestors for ages have maintained that character. 'We have lost all but our honor,' said Francis I of France; be it *our* motto."

In another letter, Randolph advises Ryland to keep a diary and gives him very persuasive reasons why he should do so. In the same letter commenting on the rule which Ryland had laid down for himself, "not to follow any of the maxims of the young men of the present day," he, while declaring the rule to be an excellent one, shrewdly suggests that, at the same time, there was no necessity for Ryland letting the young men know it except by his conduct. He then digresses into these amusing observations on the improper transposition of words:

"In short, I hear nobody who does not transpose the two verbs *to lie* and *to lay*. 'A fine ship—she *lays* at Murrays wharf.' Query, eggs or wagers? 'Won't you *lay* down?' What? my hat, or my principles? This unfortunate word happens to be the infinitive of one verb and the preterite of the other: this may have led to the confusion. Perhaps, the odious sound *to lie*, in one sense of the term, has also led to its discard—if you will suffer me to make a noun of a verb (Nouns turned into verbs meet you everywhere. I have heard 'to *court martial* an officer'); to which *picquet* familiarized my ear, when I was a boy, and played that game with the best of mothers; to whom I am indebted for what little knowledge I possess of the idiom

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, March 8, 1816, *Maine Hist. Soc.*



and orthoepy of the English language. 'Laid' for *lain* is equally common.

"*Learn* for *teach* is another error almost as general. Some of the tenses of the verb to *sit*, for *set*, are also very common. 'He *sat* off yesterday,' for *he set off* (i.e., did set, for this verb is inflexible, referring to change in any of its tenses). The sun set last evening at 56 minutes past five. It is not uncommon to hear this verb used for the other. 'Is the house *setting*?' 'Setting what—razors or hens?' 'Will you *set* down.' 'No, but you ought to be *set down* for bad grammar.' 'Sowed, for 'sown,' altho not, like the rest, *false*, yet it is not *good*. The people, among whom you reside, are not famous for their correctness in language, altho they laugh in their cockney tongue at the Virginians who richly deserve it for their *whar* and *thar* and *stars* (i.e., *stairs*); about as near as the truth as *weer* or *wer*, *theer* or *ther*, and *steen*. For orthoepy, I refer you to Walker, altho he cannot be always relied on. I hope that you do not pronounce 'kind,' 'sky,' with the k hard: but that you soften the sound like that of c in *cards* and of g in *garden* and *guard*. I hope too that you do not say *obleeged* for obliged."<sup>1</sup>  
(a)

To some of his older relations, too, Randolph was fervently attached. One was his brother Richard. "He was the best and truest of brothers," Randolph said in a letter to James Monroe. Sawyer states that Richard was "a man of great personal beauty and superior talents."<sup>2</sup> He might have added that he had the faculty of winning affection, which we are almost tempted to say is, if not abused, a better thing than either.

Of Judith, too, Randolph was very fond, notwithstanding the impatience that he occasionally exhibited with her positive characteristics, which were, doubtless, asserted not more emphatically than his own temperament at times made necessary. The few letters from her to him, which still exist, show that he was both esteemed and

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Mar. 17, 1816, *Maine Hist. Soc.*

<sup>2</sup> Sawyer, 6.

beloved by her. Though, in a letter to Creed Taylor, she very properly sought the independent advice of the latter on certain points, affecting the pecuniary interests of her sons, which had arisen out of the partition of a portion of the estate of Randolph's father between Randolph and her husband's estate, and even called attention to the fact that, while she had lived "but a little removed from poverty," Randolph had made purchases of real estate to the extent of upwards of £3,000, she yet disclaimed any intent whatever to reflect upon his integrity, and said: "To you, my dear Sir, I need not mention the long and affectionate attachment I have cherished for the brother of him who was the best of husbands."<sup>1</sup> As to Taylor himself, he is distinctly on record as expressing the opinion that Randolph was "one of the most honest men in the world."<sup>2</sup> Nothing need be added to what we have already said about the estimation in which Judith's proficiency as a domestic manager was held by Randolph. In an early letter to his friend, Wm. Thompson, he spoke of her as "that pattern of female virtue."<sup>3</sup> In another letter to Thompson, he described her as a woman who united to talents of the first order a degree of cultivation uncommon in any country, but especially in ours.<sup>4</sup> Not only William S. Lacy, in his *Recollections*, but John Randolph Bryan, too, has testified to the love that Randolph bore for Judith.<sup>5</sup>

He often visited her after he left Bizarre, and her name several times appears in his journals as a visitor at Roanoke. Indeed, in one of her letters to him she says that she hopes soon to be up again, and ready to return to Roanoke, and enter upon her new occupation as housekeeper; but this, apparently, she never did.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> March 17, 1810, *Creed Taylor Papers*.

<sup>2</sup> *Creed Taylor Papers*.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 1, 173.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, 167.

<sup>5</sup> Letter to Mr. Robertson, Mar. 27, 1818, Bryan MSS.

<sup>6</sup> Undated, Bryan MSS.

After the death of Tudor, and St. George's loss of reason, Judith, between grief and declining health, presents herself to us as little more than a Niobe—all tears. Subsequent to these events, she became even more intimate than before with Dr. John H. Rice and his wife, and died at their home in Richmond, where she had resided, agreeably with their repeated invitations, ever since the death of Tudor, on March 10, 1816<sup>1</sup>; leaving a will by which she made Randolph one of her executors and bequeathed a legacy of \$1,000 to Dr. Rice; which that able and good man, moved partly by the fear that his kindness to her in her later years might be ascribed to mercenary motives, distributed among various Christian charities which he knew that she had patronized, when living.<sup>2</sup> Such a pronounced pietist was Judith, after her conversion to Presbyterianism, that Randolph in one of his letters to Dr. Dudley once said: "I heard from Bizarre today. All there are well. I shall not be disappointed if a lady of our acquaintance should give her hand to some Calvinistic parson."<sup>3</sup> Very noble in spirit and form is a letter from Randolph to Dr. Rice, which was written six days after Judith's death, and which furnishes us with but another proof that the affection and respect that Judith and Randolph felt for each other was never really shaken:

"Your letter of the 13th is this moment received. The others have all come to hand, although generally one or two days later than the due course of mail. They would demand my most grateful acknowledgements, if they were not already due for obligations of a far higher nature—obligations by which I am bound not less to Mrs. Rice than to yourself.

"After the first sharp pang was over, I could not but view Mrs. Randolph's departure as a release from sufferings that it is to be hoped have few examples; from a world that no longer

<sup>1</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoir of Dr. John H. Rice*, by Wm. Maxwell, 125 (note).

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Oct. 29, 1810, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 73.

had a single charm for her. I knew her better than anybody else. Her endowments were of the highest order; and it gave me the greatest comfort, of which under such circumstances I am susceptible, to learn that she died as every Christian could wish to die. The manner, in which she spoke of me in her last moments, is also truly grateful.

"I received your letter, announcing that her case was a doubtful one, the day after Mr. Leigh's, which arrived on Saturday. His was much the more alarming of the two. On Sunday morning, I awoke with the strongest impression on my mind that Mrs. R. was no more: and, while penning the note for the prayers of the Church agreeable to our service, I felt almost restrained by the consideration of impiety in deprecating that which God had willed and done. I shook it off however; but I could not shake off the impression that she was in the land of spirits. I almost saw her pale and shadowy, purified from the dross of the body,—looking sorrowfully yet benignantly upon me."<sup>1</sup>

The last words uttered by Tudor and his mother, respectively, certify as nothing but similar words could do to the profound spiritual change infused by Presbyterianism into the class of Southside Virginians of which Judith was a representative. Those of Tudor were: "Don't grieve for me, for I die happy"; those of Judith: "Christ is my only hope."<sup>2</sup>

Tenderer still were the relations of Randolph to his sister Fanny Bland Tucker, who afterwards became the wife of John Coalter. His letters to St. George Tucker frequently contain loving messages to her when she was a mere girl. It is to be deeply regretted that his letters to her, with a few exceptions, should have perished, as so much else from his pen did; but a number of her letters to him are extant, and they reveal an unusual capacity for fluent and correct composition, a rare degree of fidelity to all the domestic virtues, a heart overflowing with love not

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Mar. 16, 1816, *Memoir of Dr. Jno. H. Rice*, 125.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 119 (note) and 124 (note).

only for her husband and children, but for her kith and kin generally; and alas! besides the consumptive habit of body which finally brought her to the grave, but which never beclouded her spirits nor fretted the pure rich flow of her affections. It is impossible to read her letters to Randolph without feeling that she too must have been in his mind when he depicted in such a happy manner in the House the Virginia matron and her distaff. Her letters to Randolph abound in references to her children, including the one whom she terms Randolph's favorite, and supply one more additional proof of the partiality that Randolph felt for children. In one letter she sends him the love of her children, and their thanks for a present which he has just made to them.<sup>1</sup> In another, referring to Randolph's "little favorite," she says: "Saint is a fine fellow. I am sure you will love him more than ever."<sup>2</sup>

One of the most earnest cravings of her heart during the period covered by her letters was that there should be a reunion of all the descendants of her mother and their wives and children under one roof.

"How much pleasure, my dear brother," she exclaims in one of her letters to Randolph, "would it give me could I see you, with the whole of the Roanoke-Bizarre families, together with Henry's and my own family, under one roof. No matter which of our houses, but let us hope ere we die to be once altogether. I am in the center, and, therefore, hope you will all give this spot (Elm Grove) the preference—at least I think you ought to do so."<sup>3</sup>

In the succeeding year she recurs to the same subject, revealing again as she does so the deep love that she entertained for Randolph:

"I wish," she said, "to hold some affectionate intercourse with one so dear to me; to tell you of my children, and to know

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 18, 1809, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> May 11, 1811, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Aug. 19, 1810, Bryan MSS.

in return something of yourself—at least to read assurance of your continued love for me. Be convinced I think much of you, and lament the destiny which has so widely separated us. I had hoped to see you last Fall, but we were baffled in our attempts to visit you. I trust, however, a day may come when we shall be under your roof. Meantime, my object is to meet altogether in this place, and I entreat you not to disappoint me. Brother Henry has promised to bring his family with him in July; Beverley and Polly will be with us too, according to appointment, and you, my dear brother, will not withhold your presence. I am sure you could not, if you knew how anxiously we wish to have such a group in our house.”<sup>1</sup>

And so she continued to write to him as long as her sweet spirit resided in its “fleshy nook.”

And these were the endearing terms in which Randolph wrote to her a year or so after he became a member of the House:

“I thank you most cordially, my beloved Fan, for your much valued letter. It was rendered even more acceptable to me by a circumstance which you will find no difficulty in divining. That ‘delicate refinement known to few’ served but to endear you yet more to your fond brother, whose heart has not been for many days unoccupied during a single moment by your image. Forgive him, my sister, if in his late letter there escaped one thought which could give you uneasiness. There was not one sentiment, which it contained, which was not dedicated by the tenderest solicitude for you. For you, at this moment, does his heart throb with anxious affection. Yes, my dearest Fan, I do love you not as ever, but infinitely more. So does our poor dear Judy; although she does not express it so frequently to you. After you have perused the enclosed, return it to me.

“I do not admit your excuse, even if there were foundation for it. I deny that elegance of style constitutes the beauty of letter-writing. Could you write like Lady Montague or Madame de Sévigné, it would gratify me, no doubt, but it is

<sup>1</sup> Apr. 4, 1811, Bryan MSS.

neither the style, nor the matter which is most valuable to me in your letters. It is *yourself*. It is the token of your love which, if it consisted of the initials of your name only, would be valuable to me. How am I obliged to you for playing my tunes for *my sake*. I shall become as much attached as you are to the organ, since it is both the memento of my affection to you and the instrument by which you express your regard to me. Alas! I scarcely ever see Mrs. Mason; nor have I seen Miss Lloyd but for a few moments during the winter. *I have no musick*. I mingle in no diversions. But I want not any thing to remind me of the best and most beloved of sisters. Adieu my darling Fan. Love him who is truly and unalterably yours. John Randolph, Jr.”<sup>1</sup>

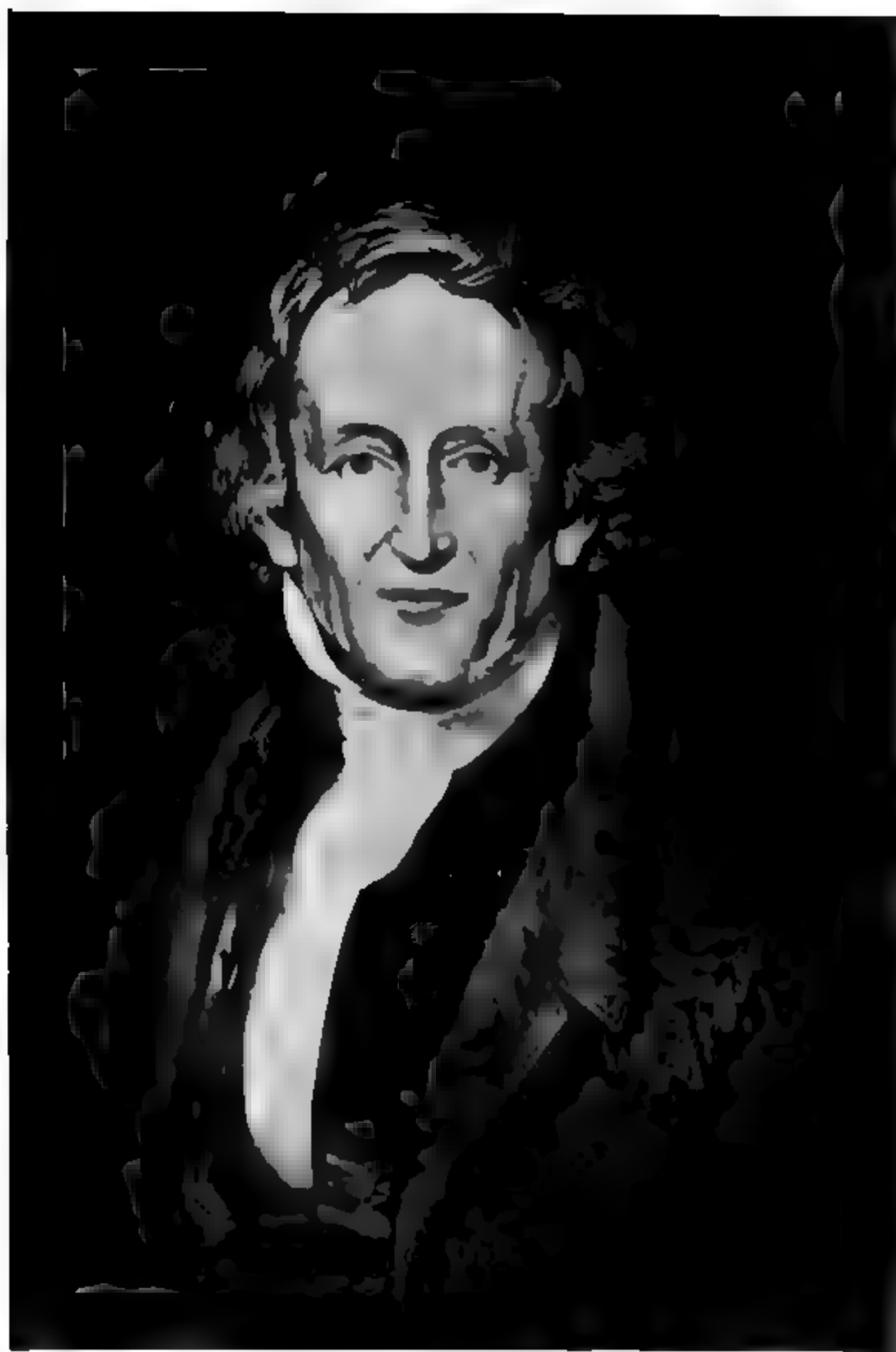
And love each other they did until the very last.

Henry St. George Tucker, Randolph's "uterine brother," as he called him, was one of the correspondents to whom Randolph wrote almost as often as he did to Dr. Brockenbrough or Tazewell. He was an admirable man in point of intellect, character, disposition, and manners, and Randolph was not only truly attached to him, but had a profound underlying respect for him besides. This was natural enough, for no public man, except a few of the very first rank, ever occupied a higher place in the admiration of the people of Virginia than Henry St. George Tucker. "In short, in my opinion," Judge E. C. Burks, long a conspicuous member of the Virginia Court of Appeals himself, declared, "Judge Tucker stands first in the bright catalogue of Virginia's distinguished jurists; *inter pares facile princeps*."<sup>2</sup>

Of Henry St. George Tucker, when he was a member of Congress, Sawyer says that he was little inferior to Randolph as a debater, and he contrasts the disposition and temper of the former with those of the latter, decidedly to the disadvantage of the latter. But we know nothing

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Jan. 26, 1802, *Maine Hist. Soc.*

<sup>2</sup> *Va. Law Register*, Mar. 1896, No. 11, v. 1, 810.



**JUDGE HENRY ST. GEORGE TUCKER**

From the portrait owned by the Hon. Henry St. George Tucker, Lexington, Va.





whatever to justify Sawyer's statement that "there appeared no such evident marks of familiar affection and attachment between them during the time they served together as we were led to suspect from their near relationship."<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, the frequency with which Randolph wrote to Henry St. George Tucker, the deep concern which he exhibited when the latter was severely injured in a stage-coach accident in 1816, and the affectionate references to him in Randolph's letters to third persons, from the early part of Randolph's life until its last hours, all fully warrant the view that we have taken of the relations of the two brothers. In one of his letters to St. George Tucker, Randolph said: "When I reflect too that it is your intention to settle Henry in a distant quarter, where I can never see and seldom hear from him, it brings the most mournful recollections and presages to my mind."<sup>2</sup> In another letter to his step-father, Randolph said playfully: "My love to dear Fan. Why do not the *boys* write to me? Beg Hal's pardon for this insult to [the] toga *virilis*."<sup>3</sup> In 1811, Randolph wrote to Dr. Dudley that he had reached Richmond half dead, but that he had been amply compensated by meeting with his dear brother Henry.<sup>4</sup> Some 10 or 12 years later, he wrote to his niece: "What have I done to Uncle Henry that he will not write to me?"<sup>5</sup> And, some three years later, after Henry St. George Tucker had visited him at Roanoke, he said in his vivid way: "This visit of your Uncle Henry has spoiled me. A sudden flash of lightning makes the succeeding darkness more intense."<sup>6</sup> It was in the succeeding year that he wrote to his niece that he had given up all his correspondents for a time, even her Uncle

<sup>1</sup> P. 73.

<sup>2</sup> Bizarre, Nov. 3, 1801, Lucas MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Jan. 10, 1803, *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Hanover C. H., Nov. 1, 1811, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 114.

<sup>5</sup> Bryan MSS.

<sup>6</sup> Roanoke, Jul. 27, 1825, Bryan MSS.

Henry.<sup>1</sup> The correspondence was too agreeable to be long abandoned, and, two years later, he enclosed a letter from "Harry" to him to his niece, saying that she would read it with great pleasure if it gave her a hand-breadth part of the pleasure that it had given him.<sup>2</sup> At one time, he seems to have written to Henry every day.<sup>3</sup> In 1828, his affection for him was still undiminished, as was proved by a letter to his niece in which he said: "I have now only brother Harry and you to be proud of. Tell him to write to me before he leaves Chatham, and as soon as he gets home."<sup>4</sup> Randolph sometimes visited his brother at his home at Winchester, and Henry was occasionally at Roanoke. In one of his letters to his niece, Randolph said that he wished very much to see his brother Henry, even if it were but for a minute.<sup>5</sup> In 1829, he noted with gratification, in a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, the fact that the affection of his brother Henry for him was increasing with their advancing years.<sup>6</sup> A few days later, he wrote to the same friend that he did not know anywhere a more useful and respectable man than his brother.<sup>7</sup>

While the two brothers were separated during the course of their lives for considerable intervals of time, they were never, so far as we are aware, in the slightest degree estranged from each other at any time. "If my dear brother Harry be not gone, entreat him to come to me on the receipt of this," were among the last words that Randolph ever penned, and were written when he was on his way to his deathbed at Philadelphia.<sup>8</sup> (a)

Randolph's cynical distrust of the medical fraternity

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 25, 1826, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 8, 1828, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> L. W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS., March 8, 1826.

<sup>4</sup> Roanoke, Oct. 7, 1828, Bryan MSS.

<sup>5</sup> Mar. 6, 1824, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>6</sup> Jan. 26, 1829, Mrs. Gilbert S. Meem MSS.

<sup>7</sup> Jan. 31, 1829, *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> Garland, v. 2, 365.

made an amusing story of the professional attentions bestowed upon Henry after the stage-coach accident, to which we have referred.

"Now what do you think," he wrote to Dr. Dudley. "Henry T.'s shoulder, that was at first neither dislocated nor broken, but then dislocated by the same doctor, (neither physician nor surgeon), next, by 'two able Winchester physicians,' pronounced not to be dislocated, but fractured in the — process of the *scapula*, then, by the same 'two able' leeches (reconsidering their opinion, like Congress, in order to make confusion worse confounded,) declared to be a dislocation, unusual, of the *os humeri*; whereupon the said 'doctors' and 'four strong men' put the said *patient* to the rack, without succeeding in tearing asunder all the muscles and ligaments. This injury has been *decided* by P. W., and D., (we have now got to the Court of Appeals, and can go no further,—right or wrong, the case is *decided*) to be a *fracture* of the *os humeri*! and my poor brother is likely to be able to attend Congress before the end of the session. This beats Molière, or Le Sage, hollow.

"Now, my dear Theodore, for I think I shall never call you 'Doctor' again, on the receipt of this, let the wagons set out, if they have a load, for Manchester."<sup>1</sup>

A remarkable letter is the following written by Randolph to Henry shortly after the death of the latter's eldest son in 1826. It is all the more remarkable in that it was penned after the paroxysm of religious enthusiasm, which overthrew Randolph's reason in 1818, had subsided:

"May he, who has the power and always the will, when earnestly, humbly and devoutly entreated, support and comfort you, my brother! I shall not point to the treasures that remain to you in your surviving children, and their mother dearer than all of them put together. No, I have felt too deeply how little power have words, that play around the head, to reach the heart, when it is sorely wounded. The common-places of consolation are at the tongue's end of all the self-

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 4, 1817, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 186.

complacent and satisfied from the pedant priest to the washer-woman. (They who don't feel can talk.) I abjure them all; but the father of Lord Russell, when condoled with according to form, by the book, replied, 'I would not give my dead son for any other man's living.' May this thought come home to your bosom too; though not on the same occasion. May the Spirit of God, which is not a chimera of heated brains nor a device of artful men to frighten and cajole the credulous, but is as much an existence that can be felt and understood as the whisperings of your own heart, or the love you bore to him whom you have lost—may that Spirit, which is the Comforter, shed his influence upon your soul, and incline your heart to the only right way, which is that of life eternal!

“ Did you ever read Bishop Butler's *Analogy*? If not, I will send it to you. . . . Have you ever read THE BOOK? What I say upon this subject I not only believe, but I know to be true; that the Bible, studied with humble and contrite heart, never yet failed to do its work even with them that from idiosyncrasy, or disordered minds have conceived that they were cut off from its promises of life to come.

“ ‘Ask and ye shall have; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.’ This was my only support and stay during years of misery and darkness; and, just as I had almost begun to despair, after more than ten years of penitence and prayer, it pleased God to enable me to see the truth to which until then my eyes had been sealed. To this vouchsafement I have made the most ungrateful return. But I would not give up my slender portion of the price paid for our redemption—yes, my brother, our redemption—the ransom of sinners—of all who do not hug their chains and refuse to come out from the house of bondage—I say I would not exchange my little portion in the Son of David for the Parthian or Roman Empires, as described by Milton in the temptation of our Lord and Saviour—not for all with which the enemy tempted the Saviour of men.

“ This is the secret of the change of my spirits which all who know me must have observed within a few years past. After years spent in humble and contrite entreaty that the tremendous sacrifice on Mount Calvary might not have been made in

vain for me, the chiefest of sinners, it pleased God to speak his peace into my heart—that peace of God which passeth all understanding to them that know it not and even to them that do; and, although I have now, as then, to reproach myself with time mis-spent and faculties mis-employed; although my condition has on more than one occasion resembled that of him, who, having an evil spirit cast out of him, was taken possession of by seven other spirits more wicked than the first, and the first also—yet I trust that they too, by the power and mercy of God, may be, if they are not, vanquished.

“But where am I running to? On this subject more hereafter. Meanwhile, assure yourself of what is of small value compared with that of them that are a piece of yourself—of the unchanged regard and sympathy of your mother’s son. . . . Ignorant of true religion, but not yet an atheist, I remember, with horror, my impious expostulations with God upon this breavement [the death of his mother]. ‘But not yet an atheist.’ The existence of Atheism has been denied. But I was an honest one—and poor—too. Hume began and Hobbes finished me. (I read Spinoza and all the tribe.) Surely, I fell by no ignoble hand. And the very man [Edmund Randolph], who gave me Hume’s *Essay on Human Nature* to read, administered ‘Beattie on Truth’ as the antidote. Venice treacle against arsenic and the essential oil of bitter almonds; a bread and milk poultice for the bite of the Cobra Capello.

“Had I remained a successful political leader, I might never have been a Christian. But it pleased God that my pride should be mortified; that, by death and desertion, I should lose my friends; that, except in the veins of a maniac, and he too possessed ‘of a deaf and dumb spirit,’ there should not run one drop of my father’s blood in any living creature besides myself. The death of Tudor finished my humiliation. I had tried all things but the refuge of Christ, and to that, with parental stripes, was I driven.

“Often did I cry out with the father of that wretched boy, ‘Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief’; and the gracious mercy of our Lord to this wavering faith, staggering under the force of the hard heart of unbelief, I humbly hoped would, in his good time, be extended to me also.—St. Mark, ix, 17–29.

Throw Revelation aside, and I can drive any man by irresistible induction to Atheism. John Marshall could not resist me. When I say any man, I mean a man capable of logical and consequential reasoning. Deism is the refuge of them that startle at Atheism and can't believe Revelation. And poor —— (may God forgive us both!) and myself used, with Diderot and Co., to laugh at the Deistical Bigots who must have milk, not being able to digest meat.

“All Theism is derived from revelation; that of the Jews confessedly. Our own is from the same source. So is the false revelation of Mahomet; and I can't much blame the Turks for considering the Franks and Greeks to be Idolaters. Every other idea of *one God*, that floats in the world, is derived from the tradition of the sons of Noah, handed down to posterity.

“But enough and more than enough. I can hardly guide my pen. I will, however, add, that no lukewarm seeker ever became a real Christian; for ‘from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force.’ A text which I read 500 times, before I had the slightest conception of its application.”<sup>1</sup>

After Randolph's death, Henry St. George Tucker was very much shocked by the aspersions which the will of 1821 cast upon the integrity of his father; but, in the discharge of his divided duty to the memory of his father and to the memory of his brother, he exhibited an extraordinary degree of impartial affection. Referring to letters which he had received from his brother Beverley and Wm. Leigh, he wrote to John Randolph Bryan:

“The letters disclose more and more unpleasant matters in connection with my brother's will. They compel the descendants of St. George Tucker to believe that, for many years, their brother was, by the visitation of God's providence, bereft of reason; or to feel a strong sentiment of indignation at the calumnious assertion found in his will of '22 of one of

<sup>1</sup> *Southern Collegian*, March 23, 1872.

the purest and most virtuous of men. Should that will be brought forward, I for one will resist it; since I never can admit my brother's sanity in an instrument that either brands my dear father as a fraudulent guardian and plunderer, or holds my brother out as a calumniator and slanderer."<sup>1</sup>

Randolph's relations to his half-brother, Beverley Tucker, were also, on the whole, very affectionate. In his early letters to St. George Tucker, he sends the same fraternal messages to Beverley as to Henry. In one of them, he refers to the two brothers as "those dear fellows."<sup>2</sup> "My dear Beverley," he said in another, "must not blame me for not answering his kind letter by Mr. Bassett. I am as ever his entirely."<sup>3</sup> Subsequently, after the marriage of Beverley to Miss Mary Coalter, the sister of Judge John Coalter, he took up his residence at Roanoke, and practiced law in the surrounding territory.<sup>4</sup> And here he remained until the year 1815, when he emigrated to Missouri, where he soon became a judge. Later, he returned to Virginia, and died there after a distinguished career as a law-lecturer and a man of letters.

Not long after Beverley removed to Roanoke, Randolph conveyed to him a tract of land near Roanoke, and transferred to him a number of slaves with whom to cultivate it; and Beverley also received some assistance from his father. But, under the influence of the feelings, excited by the suspended expectations of early professional life, and the burdens of domestic responsibility, he was overtaken by a fit of despondency which elicited this most affectionate letter from Randolph:

"It grieves me, my dear brother, to see you so unhappy. If I do not betray concern, it is not because I do not feel it, and

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Mrs. Bryan to Mrs. Lelia Tucker, Eagle Point, Sept. 19, 1833, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Richm., Apr. 30, 1798, Lucas MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Balto., Dec. 17, 1805, Lucas MSS., J. R. to St. George Tucker.

<sup>4</sup> Bizarre, Nov. 14, 1809, Lucas MSS.



I do assure you that I have found much difficulty to command myself when I have seen you so greatly agitated or sunk into the most spiritless dejection. Time, however, teaches us many things which we little dreamed of in early life; it cannot teach me, however, to be insensible to the sufferings of those whom I love, from whatsoever cause they may proceed. This house, such as it is, is yours, so long as you please to occupy it. It will at least afford a shelter to yourself and your wife. The land at Daniel's and the labor of Doll's children (I conclude that your father has given you Abraham) will insure you bread. But, my dear Bev., can you ever want whilst I have anything left in this world! Should I survive you, which is hardly possible, your family shall be to me as my own. I cannot write——"<sup>1</sup>

While Beverley resided at Roanoke, or on his own land nearby, the most familiar and affectionate relations existed between Randolph and him and his wife Polly. On one occasion, Beverley wrote to Randolph that Polly was quite "crazy" to see him<sup>2</sup>; and, in one of his letters to his sister, Randolph asks her to congratulate Polly, who was at the time near Staunton, in his name on her maternal honors.<sup>3</sup> (a) It is said that, whenever Beverley was at Roanoke, he sat at the foot of Randolph's table, unless there was some clergyman present to occupy the place.<sup>4</sup> Before his emigration to Missouri, he acquired a good professional footing in Southside Virginia, and his engagements as a lawyer are occasionally brought to our attention in Randolph's journals. His mobility, however, was responsible for several indications of slight impatience on Randolph's part: "I fear I shall lose the opportunity of Beverley. He has been *missing* ever since yesterday morning,"<sup>5</sup> Randolph wrote on one occasion to Dr.

<sup>1</sup> Geo. P. Coleman MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, June 17, 1810, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Charlotte C. H., Aug. 19, 1811, J. C. Grinnan MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Bouldin, 24.

<sup>5</sup> Richm., Jan. 24, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 151.



**JUDGE N. BEVERLEY TUCKER**

From a portrait owned by George P. Coleman, Esq., of Williamsburg, Va.



Dudley. In a later letter, he wrote to Dr. Dudley: "To my surprise I received a letter from Beverley, dated the 10th, at *Richmond!* London would not have been more unexpected."<sup>1</sup>

When Beverley made up his mind to return to Virginia, Randolph was eager to welcome him back. "More than half of the allotted time within which you 'must be in Missouri' has elapsed," he wrote to Beverley at St. Louis on the eve of his return to Virginia, "or I would set out tomorrow for Winchester to see you once more before I die, and something tells me that that time is not far off." In conclusion, he says: "Write to me as often as you can; the oftener the better, and the longer the better."<sup>2</sup>

After Beverley's return to Virginia, we occasionally find him in close companionship with Randolph, both in Charlotte County and at Washington, and it was Randolph's desire that he should succeed him as the representative of his old District in the House.<sup>3</sup>

After Randolph's death, Beverley was particularly active in the prosecution of the attacks on his wills, which resulted in the final compromise; and among his papers, which are still in existence, is an interesting one, dated May 15, 1836, in which John R. Cooke, one of the counsel in the Randolph will litigation, outlined to John G. Mosby, another eminent Virginia lawyer of that day, his reasons for thinking that the insanity of Randolph could be judicially established. The paper is a curious specimen of the unhesitating zeal with which a lawyer, when he wishes to make out a case for his client, will undertake to construct a stone wall out of batter puddings. He was even prepared to assert that Randolph was insane in 1811, 1812, 1814, and 1815, as well as in 1818, 1819, and 1820.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Apr. 15, 1816, *Id.*, 177.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, May 27, 1825, Geo. P. Coleman MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Testimony of Dr. Brockenbrough in *Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor.*, Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>4</sup> George P. Coleman MSS.

To Beverley Tucker we owe a slight sketch of Randolph.<sup>1</sup> More important, however, is the following tribute which he paid to him in an address delivered before the students of Randolph-Macon College.

"Gentlemen," he said, in this address, "if there be any truth in the ideas I have laid before you, I owe the knowledge of that truth to one of those illustrious men whose names you have consecrated by adopting them as the designation of your institution. You have engraven the name of Randolph on the shrine here erected to Literature, to Science and to God. What offering so fit for that altar; what offering so proper for me to lay upon it as this poor attempt to embody and preserve something of the teaching of that deep sagacity and profound wisdom which distinguished him, and which he labored to impart to me. Love to the brother, gratitude to the benefactor, even these sentiments should be subordinate to my veneration for the man from whose eloquent lips I have learned more than from all my own experience and reflection, and from all the men with whom I have ever conversed, and from all the books I have ever read."<sup>2</sup>

The fraternal kindness, of which Randolph made Beverley the object, is also alluded to in one of the letters from Fanny Bland Coalter to Randolph. Speaking of Beverley and his newly-married wife, she says:

"Our brother and sister leave tomorrow, my dearest brother, and I cannot withhold my congratulations to you on their marriage; not only as an event, which promises much comfort to you during your days of leisure, but an unexhaustible source of gratification in the reflection that their happiness is the consequence of your own beneficence—the purest happiness surely which mortal can know. May they both, my beloved brother, by their gratitude and affectionate attention towards you, prove a solace and support to you in the hours of pain and sickness, so many of which fall to your lot."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Mag.*, v. 2 (1859), 187.

<sup>2</sup> *Sou. Lit. Mess.*, v. 12, 5511.

<sup>3</sup> Mar. 18, 1809, Bryan MSS.

An effort was made in the Randolph will litigation to show that, before Beverley went off to Missouri, a serious estrangement had sprung up between him and Randolph, but the effort did not get very far. The basis for it apparently was a statement of Randolph's that he had given to Beverley the only slaves of his that were unencumbered by the British debt, and also a tract of land in Charlotte County to enable him to support his family; that the slaves were connected by family ties with other slaves retained by him; that it was understood by Beverley and himself that, as soon as the slaves retained by him were released from the encumbrance, Beverley and he were to make an exchange of slaves that would restore those that had been given to Beverley by Randolph and their former family ties; but that Beverley had failed to carry out his part of the understanding.<sup>1</sup> At this late day, this statement can have no value beyond that of a merely *ex parte* one, which rested, besides, on oral testimony only; and the prudence of not accepting it too quickly is suggested likewise by the fact that the blame for the miscarriage of the understanding was cast by Randolph upon St. George Tucker.<sup>2</sup> And it is noticeable that the same witness, who testified to the statement in the Randolph will litigation, also testified that, on the first occasion that he saw Randolph and Beverley together after Beverley's return from Missouri, Randolph treated the latter with great kindness and affection, and that their relations at a later date were those of "great intimacy."<sup>3</sup>

The truth is that Randolph's brothers and sisters of the half-blood loved and admired him in the highest degree, and were warmly loved and admired by him in turn, and that, if any fugitive cloud ever threw its shadow over his

<sup>1</sup> Deposition of John Marshall in *Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor.*, Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

intercourse with any one of the three, the fact was solely due to his own idiosyncracies.

But where could we go to find anything more charming or more suggestive of human nature in its purest and tenderest moments than the intercourse between Randolph and his niece—Elizabeth T. Coalter? Here and there among the numerous letters from him to her there are inflections of misanthropy, spiritual weariness, and physical pain; but, as a whole, these letters are not morbid enough to forfeit their right to be compared with the best of the sort in any language.

One of them invites his niece to pay him a visit at Roanoke.

“My dear,” he says, “can’t you and Fanny come down sometime or other to see me—your mother’s brother? I do expect St. George but suppose him to be confined at school. I assure you my shades are as cool, as free from dust, as Bush Hill; and as for noises, I hear none but the warbling of the birds and the barking of the squirrels around my windows. I am here buried in a solitude as deep as that of Robinson Crusoe himself, and like him yearn after the converse of mankind. I have a few pretty well selected books and a very gentle saddle horse, and, although I am nearly worn down with disease and premature old age, I can ride at the sober pace that suits a lady.”<sup>1</sup>

A letter in the succeeding year has a word of praise for natural, unstudied letter-writing; and from this subject Randolph deviates to some tart criticism of the changes made in the style and idiom of the Bible and the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer by “pudding-bellied bishops.”<sup>2</sup> In the same letter, he offers to replace his niece’s favorite pony with a horse which he would have thoroughly broken for her, he said.

Instruction in one form or another was rarely out of his

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Jun. 12, 1821, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Jan. 27, 1822, Bryan MSS.

mind when he was writing to his niece; and the letter concludes with an enumeration of the famous English writers that he would have her take as models for the formation of her style.

“Were you ever struck,” he asks, “with the exceeding beauty of two little morsels, Goldsmith’s ‘When Lovely Woman Stoops to Folly,’ and Collins’,

“‘How sleep the brave who sink to rest  
By all their country’s wishes blest.’

How simple the words! By the way, Collins had true inspiration. It deserted Milton when he added the two last lines of his *Paradise Lost*.”

In another letter, he counsels her not to be afraid of plenty of fresh air, and warns her against the dangers of a stooping posture.<sup>1</sup>

In his correspondence with his niece, he was at great pains to see that she did not fall into artificial or pretentious forms of expression. On one occasion, he tells her that her reflections on sickness and adversity are, with the exception of a line and a half, well written; and, after quoting the words which met with his disapproval, he comments as follows:

“‘Why this is affectations,’ as Sir Hugh says. There is a good deal of the same sort in Mrs. (not Lady) Montague’s letters, and there is nothing else in Miss Anne Seward’s, in fifty-nine volumes folio, which have been published, as her will directs, by her executor.”

But he makes everything right by ending: “God bless you, my dear. I have a charming copy of Shakespeare for you.”<sup>2</sup>

If he had been her lover, he could not have manifested

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 18, 1822, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Feb. 5, 1822. Bryan MSS.



more concern than he did when he heard that her cough was still dry and a good deal harassing.<sup>1</sup>

On one occasion, he had evidently inculcated moderation of language on the part of his niece just a little too earnestly; for we find him employing these soothing words:

“My dear Bet, you can use no language too strong, I am sure, to express the force of your affection to your father. My whole design was to repress the habit of using unnecessarily strong terms. . . . And, although I am no friend to that figure of speech, which rhetoricians call hyperbole, I am beginning to feel that I am fast becoming your dearest uncle or, what is the same thing, you are growing to be my dearest niece”;

and then he leaves the dangerous topic, and goes on to tell her about the rout which he had just attended at Madame De Neuville's in Washington: “There,” he said, “I saw our poor wild men like calves fattening and patted by the butchers to make them quiet under the knife; unlearning their best qualities and learning our worst. My red blood partook of their injuries.”<sup>2</sup>

When necessary, he did not hesitate to take his niece quite sharply to task for misuse of language. Referring on one occasion to her last letter, he said: “You ‘have been dissipating it.’ Dissipating what? You see at once the whole matter and that's enough.”<sup>3</sup> On another occasion, he wrote to her:

“However as I hate prosing and commonplace as heartily as Honest Jack Falstaff did security, I shall not run into them, and you may be assured my dear that you will never see ‘elegantly studied composition’ from my pen; above all in a letter; and, if you will permit me to say so, your own would have been still better if less pains had been taken with it—

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 18, 1822, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Feb. 19, 1823, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

not in orthography or grammar or handwriting, but the expression, the collocation of words."<sup>1</sup>

On a third occasion, Randolph begins by telling his niece: "That you can write very charming letters I know, having numerous proofs of the fact in my possession"; but ends by telling her that her last letter "bears everywhere the mark of effort, constraint and ambition of ornament, and abounds with alliteration and what the Italians call conceit."<sup>2</sup>

Once he exercised the privilege of a chaperone, and admonished her that, when she came in to an evening party in Richmond from her home at Bush Hill, near that town, she should pass the night in the city.<sup>3</sup> But his reproofs and admonitions were so liberally intermixed with approbation and praise that she would have been unreasonable, indeed, if she had accepted them with a bad grace.

"I would rather see you dead than vain or pert," he said in one of his letters. "But I hope you can learn to set a just value upon your far more than ordinary worth, and yet be entirely free from the disgusting affectation and conceit of the accomplished miss of the present day. You would not believe me, if I were to tell you that you are not handsome, not only because you have heard the contrary from others, but it would not be true, if I were to say it. Yours is the beauty, not of complexion or feature, but what they cannot supply, of expression and of grace. You have a happy and ready wit; the quickness of your apprehension is uncommon, even in your sex. I hope that you add to it solidity of judgment, or that experience will bestow it. Set a proper value upon yourself for my sake, for your own, for your dear mother's.

"I know not how it happens that very clever men are prone to ally themselves to very silly and insipid women, and thus

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Jan. 19, 1822, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Feb. 14, 1825, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Feb. 19, 1823, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

propagate a race of boobies; or that fine women throw themselves away upon coxcombs and doom themselves 'to suckle fools and chronicle small beer.' A fellow with no taste for literature, a male gossip, with a full portion of admiration for his own personal charms and attractions, shall do more execution in a circle of fine women than a man of merit."<sup>1</sup>

In a letter, written nine days later, Randolph touches upon this last topic again. The letter is too well turned not to be quoted in its entirety.

"MY DEAR CHILD: Do you love gardening? I hope you do, for it is an employment eminently suited to a lady. That most graceful and amiable friend of mine, [Mrs. Dr. John Brockenbrough] whom you now never mention in your letters, excels in it, and in all the domestic arts that give its highest value to the female character. The misfortune of your sex is that you are brought up to think that love constitutes the business of life, and, for want of other subjects, your heads run upon little else. This passion, which is 'the business of the idle man, the amusement of the hero, and the bane of the sovereign,' occupies too much of your time and thoughts. I never knew an idle fellow who was not profligate (a rare case to be sure), that was not the slave of some princess, and, no matter how often the subject of his adoration was changed by a marriage with some more fortunate swain, the successor (for there is no demise of that crown) was quickly invested with the attributes of her predecessor, and he was dying of love for her lest he should die of the gapes. To a sorry fellow of this sort a mistress is as necessary an antidote against *ennui* as tobacco; but to return to gardening, I never saw one of those innumerable and lovely seats in England without wishing for one for Mrs. B. [Brockenbrough] who would know so well how to enjoy while she admired it.

"Do you read French? If not, why not? You are not one day too old to learn that and Italian, and everything else that a lady ought to know—even Greek, if you wish to imitate Lady Jane Grey. I want you to read Madame Sévigné's

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Mar. 12, 1824, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

letters, and not in a translation. I want you to be mistress of the Roman mouth and the Tuscan tongue. God bless you."<sup>1</sup>

A few weeks later, he tells Elizabeth that a Washington coachmaker had promised to complete a little carriage for him by the adjournment of Congress, and that she must hold herself in readiness to accompany him from Richmond to Roanoke; and he asks her to extend his invitation to her father, her step-mother, and her brother, and to Mammy Aggy too; and it was perhaps to make certain of her that he told her in the same letter that her last letter was admirably written and that, if the manner fell short of the inimitable grace of Madame de Sévigné, the thoughts and the language too would not be unbecoming the pen of Lady Wortley. In short, it was just what a letter ought to be with one "leetle" exception (as his good Southside friend, Major Scott, used to say).<sup>2</sup>

Another letter brings before us in a single group Elizabeth, her mother, and her grandmother.

"You do right, my dear, in setting your mother as a constant example before your eyes, and you have drawn her character with fidelity and spirit. May you resemble her in everything but the fragility of her constitution; but more especially may the likeness be found in that cheerful alacrity of temper that made all around her smile. This is a blessing, as far surpassing bodily health as the mind is superior to the body; for it is mental health. I knew your mother well from infancy to childhood, from childhood to womanhood. All the disadvantages, and they were innumerable, of her early orphanage could not render her unworthy to be called the daughter of that most distinguished woman her mother; and I will add of calling you her daughter. Her understanding was of the first order; not overlaid by accomplishments, nor yet unimproved. Hardly a day passes over my head that I do not think of her."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Washington, March 21, 1824, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, April 28, 1824, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Aug. 25, 1823, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

Another letter prescribed a complete course of reading for his niece, which evidences in the most striking manner how familiar he was with the best books of the past. "I wish," he says, among other things, "I had the leisure to complete an *Index Expurgatorius*, since I deem it more important, if possible, to point out those to be shunned than such as are worthy of perusal."<sup>1</sup>

Nor did Randolph withhold from Elizabeth his usual arraignment of Virginian barbarisms of speech. After quoting some of them such as "mar" and "har" for "mare" and "hare," he said:

"Some tumble over the other side of the steed and 'ginerally' say 'Sinate' etc. Perhaps the first man in Virginia, if not in the Union, [John Marshall] pronounces irritate, error and urgent as if the two first (each having its distinct sound) were spelt like the last with an 'u.' The same great man talks of 'independunce,' the 'firmamunt' etc., as if it were not as easy to say 'able,' short as 'ubble.'"<sup>2</sup>

Some of the letters were written while Randolph was abroad. One of these contains a reference to a stage-coach accident, which had befallen him at Stoney Stratford, and which had fractured one of his shoulder blades and two of his ribs. "I am returning a poor cripple, nearly helpless, to my native land,"<sup>3</sup> he said. One letter, received by Elizabeth, contained various extracts from a letter<sup>4</sup> which had been written to Randolph by Sir Grey Skipwith, Bart., the son of Sir Peyton Skipwith, of Prestwould, and the brother of St. George Tucker's second wife, who was then residing at Alvestone, England, and who was at the time, or recently had been, the father of 18 children, whom Randolph calls off, one by one, by name

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Jan. 19, 1822, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Jan. 30, 1822.

<sup>3</sup> At sea, Ship *Cortes*, Dec. 2, 1824, Bryan MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Roanoke, Oct. 23, 1823, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

in another letter to Elizabeth.<sup>1</sup> Among the extracts, is one in which Sir Grey said dolefully that he was sorry to add that his very prolific wife was again in a way to add to their already numerous family. It would be curious, to know what the wife of the good Baronet might have said at times about her philo-progenitive husband.

Seven years later, when Randolph was in London, he sent to Elizabeth extracts from another letter written to him by Sir Grey, in which Sir Grey informed him that it had pleased God to deprive him of his dear and excellent wife.<sup>2</sup>

Many of the letters are distinguished by the richest strains of sentiment or reflection:

“ ‘Hadst thou but lived and lived to love me,’ ” he quoted on one occasion. “Do you remember the lines of which this is the burthen, found in Bothwell’s pocket-book after his death. He is the masterpiece of all that author’s characters and it was necessary to kill him in the outset. He who can open that pocket-book without feeling his heart soften is fit for a public executioner.”

And then, with one of his sudden transitions, he adds: “And now let me just remind you that ‘on yesterday’ is not good English. Yesterday is an adverb and is not governed by any preposition.”<sup>3</sup>

“You are right my dear,” he wrote several months later, “the love of such a mother and sister as ours is a strong bond of union between us. I have felt, and shall always feel, its full force; but I would, if possible, superadd other ties. I would, for instance, wish so to conduct myself in whatever station in life it may please God to place me as to secure your esteem, and so to deport myself as to deserve your love. Rely upon it that you have very little acquaintance with men when you suppose

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 9, 1822, *Id.*

<sup>2</sup> London, Nov. 14, 1830.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Nov. 20, 1825, Bryan MSS.

that they lose in the world the recollections of their youth; that they, too, do not look back on the joys of their childhood with melancholy, or that the tide of life in man as well as woman is not stained with past and present tears and cares."<sup>1</sup>

In 1828, Elizabeth was residing in the country near Fredericksburg, and this fact was responsible for these reminiscences:

"MY DEAR CHILD: I beg pardon of the Wilderness a thousand times. I have no doubt that it is a most respectable desert, with a charming little oasis inhabited by very good sort of people, quite different from the wandering Barbarians around them. To say the truth, I was a little out of temper with the aforesaid desert because it had subjected me more than once to disappointment in regard to you. At Fredericksburg, you seem to be within my reach: but there I can't get at you. I am too much of a wild man of the woods myself to take upon me airs over my fellow-savages. And I shall be willing hereafter to rank your wilderness along with the far-famed forest of Arden. By the way, this is not saying much for it. I traveled two weary days' journey through the Ardennes in 1826. Figure for yourself a forest of beech and alder saplings intersected by a thousand cart tracks, the soil, if soil it might be called, strongly resembling the Stafford Hills of Virginia, and where, instead of spreading oaks or beech, under which I hoped to find Angelica asleep by a crystal stream, we had much ado to find a drop of water for our sorry cattle, who painfully drew us through the ruts of a narrow, hollow way, deeply worn in the uneven ground, and sheltered from everything but the sun (In August) by a thicket of brushwood, through which, every now and then, peeped the sooty figure of a charcoal burner. I did not expect to meet with Rosalind or Orlando, because I had corrected a former misapprehension in regard to the scene of that enchanting drama. Shakespeare, it seems, so say the critics, had in his eye the forest of Arden in his native Warwickshire, and a delightful forest it would be, if there were fewer towns and villages and more trees. As it is, however, it is

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 12, 1826, Bryan MSS.

what is called in England a woody tract, and the woodmen of Arden meet there annually, and contend for prizes in archery (a silver arrow or bugle); excited by the smiles of all the 'Beauty and Fashion' of the neighboring country.

"Now I, who have as little taste for 'Fashion and Etiquette' as yourself, or any hamadryad of your favourite wilderness, have nevertheless so much for Beauty that I have found a meeting of the woodmen of Arden 'go off,' as the phrase is, very well. Thank God, my *praepositus* (that is law Latin) came from Warwickshire, and thank God! again that his ancestors were from Kent, unconquered Kent, whose motto is *Invicta*, and whose post of right is the centre and van of the armed force of England.

"There is an old song about the 'men of Kent,' to which a stanza was added for the glory of Wolfe (himself a Kentish man) that used to be sung in our family, who in the old times hailed from Kent. I recollect every part of it. By the way, every Kentish man is not a 'man of Kent'; this justly proved title being confined to a certain district of the county:

" 'When Harold was invaded, and, falling, lost his crown,  
And Norman William waded thro' blood into a throne,  
The counties round with fear profound  
Beheld their sad condition,  
Laid down their arms, received his terms;  
Brave Kent made no submission.  
Then let us sing the men of Kent, etc., etc.'

After this, you may suppose the hops and the beer and the cherries there and the Church of Canterbury figure as large as life.

"Now don't go and expose my old man's prattle to any eye or ear but your own on pain of finding me hereafter as silent as the grave.

"Did I or did I not tell you that my godson [John Randolph Bryan] spent two or three days in Fredericksburg last autumn waiting for the stage that was to convey him to Roanoke, and that he was much struck with the beauty of the Fredericksburg ladies, whom he saw at church?



"My hands are cramped, as you perceive. I am much better. Yesterday, when all the world went to worship the Great King, I rode to Georgetown, and had the pleasure of passing the morning with two very amiable ladies, one of them a widow, the other a married woman."<sup>1</sup>

And what feet would not have been tempted to tread the fair meads of literature by such a seductive letter as this:

"By the way, I sent you a translation, for which at school I should have been reproved, if not chastised, but, as I never incurred either disgrace (about my book), so I will make amends now by a frank confession of my fault. I gave neither the literal sense nor the aroma, if I may say so, of the passage, but a paraphrase. I wish you knew as much Latin as I do at the least, and a great deal more Greek. And why should you not understand them as well as Lady Jane Grey or Queen Elizabeth, your namesake, or Maria Theresa, who, when she harangued in that tongue (which is in general use also in Poland), the states of Hungary received the memorable reply from the whole body; the action being suited to the word; swords leaping from their scabbards. '*Moriamur pro nostro rege, Maria Theresa.*' We will die for our King, Maria Theresa. In Hungary, there can be no queen. She is king. There is a gallant *Salique* law for you. But to return to Virgil, and I will copy the passage which describes Dido, unhappy Dido, with a felicity approaching Shakespeare. On such a night as this stood Dido with a willow in her hand upon the wild sea banks, and waved her love to come again to Carthage. Sam Johnson never said a better thing, and not often so true a one, as that the Romans would never have endured Virgil's treatment of her, if she had not been a Carthaginian. Now for the passage, to which you are indebted to a romping match between my brother Richard and myself in school time; for which I was tasked thirty lines beginning:

" 'At regina gravi jamdudum saucia cura  
Vulnus alit venis et caeco carpitur igni

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Jan. 2, 1828, Bryan MSS.

Multa Viri Virtus animo multusque recursat  
Gentis honos. Haerent infixi pectore vultus  
Verbaque: nec placidam membris dat cura quietem.'

"When I began, I intended only to have written as much as the first paragraph on the other page contains, but you and Dido are a couple of seducing sluts, and the enclosed note, which you must return, will show that there is another enchantress against whom I must guard my 'liver.' But to return to the pious Æneas, the Sir Charles Grandison of the Ancients and Prince of Coxcombs, or rather to his victim. His face and words stuck immovably (fixed) in her breast. It is at the beginning of the fourth book and your brother will read it to you. '*Haeret lateri lethalis arundo.*' The deadly arrow rankles in his side; the word used by Virgil means to convey the idea of sticking like a barbed arrow, not to be drawn out, deeply fixed."<sup>1</sup>

A fit companion-piece for this last letter is another which Randolph wrote a few days later to his niece:

"Why does Milton write *steep* Atlantic stream? Because poetry is not prose; altho' prose is often poetry, and of the highest order. Dr. Johnson's folio dictionary is at your hand and may, perhaps, help you to solve the meaning. But I will venture.

"The stream is 'steep,' not shelving, but perpendicular, down deeper than plummet ever sounded. But, as poetry affects us by exciting images and thoughts in us, as one instrument, though not struck, responds in unison to another, it may be because the descent of 'the gilded car of day' is (apparently) 'steep,' precipitated, plunging right down. This substitution is well understood by rhetoricians as well as poets.

"Virgil writes:

" '*Aut conjurato descendens que Dacus ab Istro.*'

Now, although you are, I believe, no Latin scholar; yet you are better able to comprehend me than thousands that are, or are

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 19, 1828, Bryan MSS.

thought to be such. I will write over each Latin word the English one, premising that the case is fixed by the termination; 'us' being nominative, and 'o' ablative. Here you see the whole Danube (i.e., the vast country watered by it). A tame imagination would have written out *conjuratus descendens que Dacus ab Istro*, making the Dacian people only the conspirator.

The *que* at the end of the present participle *descendens* is for metre and euphony only, altho' it means 'and.'"<sup>1</sup>

In the following letter, his romantic love for his niece reaches its acme:

"MY DEAR CHILD. My late apparent rashness, I am overjoyed to see, has not wounded you. That it has made you uneasy, I regret, but why was I so moved; because I love you more than worlds. I am the man in the book with one little ewe lamb: but I am not the man tamely to see the wolf carry it away. I will resist even unto blood. My fate was in your hands. When you come to know my history, you will see what it is that makes me what the world would call desperate. Desperation is the fruit of guilt, of remorse. It is for the unjust. It is for the wretched who had rather steal than work. It is for the Harrels (see Cecilia) who prefer hell at home and in their own bosoms to the foregoing of dress, and shew, and parties, and an equipage, when their fortune will not afford a wheelbarrow."<sup>2</sup>

The range of the letters, written by Randolph to his niece, is sufficiently wide to give us a sharpened insight even into his most intimate personal habits.

"What you say about modesty charms me," he once wrote to her. "It is what even a *man* of delicacy should endeavor to bring himself to. Many men think themselves absolved (and some ladies, too, I fear), when in private, from observances which no well-regulated mind will ever depart from; as some only keep clean and nice those garments and such parts of their

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 1, 1828, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Mar. 30, 1828, Bryan MSS.

persons as are exposed to view. I remember, when I was a boy, that I never practiced any of those slovenly tricks; I never put on clean stockings on unwashed feet, as I have seen my comrades do; nor thought myself at liberty, because I was unobserved, to dispense in word or deed with any of the decencies that cover, as with a garment, our naked and shuddering humanity, and distinguish us from Hottentots and brutes."<sup>1</sup>

In some of the letters, there are religious observations, which bespeak a deeper undercurrent of religious feeling, after all, than anything that we find in the letters that he wrote during his period of religious hysteria; but of these letters, as well as of his religious manifestations generally, we shall have something to say a little later on.

Among the letters written by Randolph to his niece and her husband, was one containing this advice which might be profitably taken to heart by a Virginian at the present day.

"Plant fruit and forest trees. Plant (out of sight) all unsightly objects such as offices, etc.; fence your house from the East wind by evergreens faced with deciduous trees and shrubs. Don't let it stand flaming *à la Virginienne*, as if it stood for the County. The nakedness and desolation of our country seats, especially on the tidewaters, is hideous and detestable."<sup>2</sup>

In another letter, written a few weeks later to John Randolph Bryan, after giving him a good deal of the old-fashioned advice about economy and kindred virtues which has rarely been known to find lodgment anywhere short of the caverns of the moon, Randolph promised him some acorns "of an oak from Turkey," and also a few English acorns and various edible nuts of one kind or another. This letter also bears testimony to the difficul-

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Jan. 21, 1828, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> London, Nov. 14, 1830, Bryan MSS.

ties, with which the owner of a country seat in Virginia, in Randolph's time, far removed from the shops and skilful mechanics of urban centers, and dependent for its proper care upon slipshod negro labor, had to contend.

"The parsimony I preach up," Randolph said, "does not extend to the exclusion of comforts. I hope never to see a fireplace in your house without shovel and tongs and fender, nor with broken windows. When I was on a visit to poor B., he had 8 or 10 sponging visitors and their horses, and it was with difficulty that I could get a basin or towel. Even the most necessary article in a bed chamber was missing. I do not mean the bed, for there was one, although most uncomfortable; no, furnish your rooms well, however plainly. It is a first expense for the whole of your life. Plate and china and glass you will have no occasion to buy."<sup>1</sup>

Poor B.! It is well that Randolph had the habit of amputating proper names.

After the death of Randolph, his niece, between the injurious reflections made by him in his will, executed in 1821, upon the integrity of her grandfather Tucker, and the fact that the great bulk of his estate was by his will, executed in 1832, given to her son, John C. Bryan, was placed in a very delicate and trying situation; especially as it was said by one of Randolph's overseers that, in addition to the wills, executed by Randolph, that had been brought to light after his death, he had made another, in which, after bequeathing the sum of \$50,000.00 to John C. Bryan, he had left the residue of his property to his natural heirs. Just what her feelings were, however, we are at no loss to know, because free expression was given to them by her in several letters to her step-grandmother which are still extant, and go far to confirm the high opinion which Randolph entertained of her mind and character. These letters show that not only Randolph's brothers,

<sup>1</sup> London, Dec. 28, 1830, Bryan MSS.

but his brother-in-law, Judge Coalter, felt that, whatever disposition might be made of the will of 1832, that of 1821, with its aspersions on the honor of St. George Tucker, should not be allowed to stand. Indeed, in a memorandum which accompanied one of them, Mrs. Bryan tells Mrs. Tucker that her father had declared that the will of 1821 contained a slander on his father-in-law that should not go on record uncontested while his head was warm.<sup>1</sup> In a letter, subsequent to the date of this memorandum, Mrs. Bryan also quotes her Uncle Beverley as saying:

“To both (St. George Tucker and John Randolph) we owe it to show that the charge was false, and known to him (Randolph) to be so, and to excuse the falsehood by proving his derangement. Leigh will relinquish all claim under the first will; *nevertheless we must fight against it for the honor of the dead*. About the last (making Jack his heir) we will have no controversy.”<sup>2</sup>

If Mrs. Bryan failed at all in living up to all the requirements of her painful situation, it was, perhaps, in allowing herself to be pushed by the necessities of the case into emphasizing just a little too strongly what she believed to be the mental irresponsibility of her uncle. In her first letter to Mrs. St. George Tucker, to whom she was tenderly attached, she says:

“You will have seen from the papers somewhat of Uncle Randolph’s will; and no doubt wish to know more about it, as Jack is his heir under one will. I can only say that I firmly believe that he was not for years before his death capable of making a will. I, therefore, hope that both wills may be contested and set aside. I dislike above all things that my child should be heir to so much property, especially to the loss of his uncles, who are nearer by right of blood, and have proved their worthiness, whereas he may or may not be as much so as

<sup>1</sup> Aug. 15, 1833, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Sept. 19, 1833, Bryan MSS.

they are. Papa has enjoined silence on us about this matter, but to you I always speak freely. I know that my uncle was not himself (on the subject of property especially) for years. As I hear more on the subject, you shall be informed of it. In a late affectionate letter from Uncle B. (who with his family are at Roanoke), he tells me that Mr. Wm Leigh has partly resolved to contest the *last will* in behalf of the slaves, who are emancipated *by the first*, but he does not mean to advance his claim to the property left him and his son by that same will. I do not know how it may go. I trust that the Great Ruler of Events will decide the matter aright. I should wish myself for the freeing of the slaves and the division of the property among the natural heirs, with a handsome provision for Mr. Leigh, whose long and tried friendship and services merit a return. His circumstances would make it acceptable. So Jack does not get all I do not much care about it. If I could see you, I could tell you more. This is all that I will put on paper, and this is in confidence."<sup>1</sup>

In a postscript to this letter, Mrs. Bryan further says: "I dread as much as possible the last one (the will of 1832) and had rather (almost if not quite) give up my darling to his Maker than have him live to experience such a trial and temptation. It is dreadful to think of." In the memorandum, to which we have referred, after recalling what her father had said about the will, she continues in these words:

"So say we *all*. *All* feel as one man. *All* wish *both wills* to be set aside, and I think it probable that the law will do it. I pray God to let the decision be according to the truth. My own belief is that Uncle Randolph *did wish* his slaves emancipated, and Mr. Leigh handsomely rewarded for his tried friendship. I, moreover, believe that he intended to provide for Uncle B, but disease acting on his excitable temperament kept him always more or less mad, and property was the main chord of his insanity. Death *surprised* him! If I had not

<sup>1</sup> Eagle Point, Aug. 15, 1833, Bryan MSS.

always thought him mad, I could not have loved him, and *would not* have overlooked, as I did, his disrespect to my dear grandfather. If I did not now believe him to have been mad, I could not respect his memory. I admired his talents, loved him from the tie of blood and because he loved me, and pitied him because he was sick and wretched, and sought my sympathy. I never expected *for an instant* to be the better for his being a rich man. I have always felt independent of him, *and he knew it.*"

Another letter from Mrs. Bryan to Mrs. Tucker discloses the fact that the writer never knew until after the death of her uncle that he had ever assailed the integrity of her grandfather. She had supposed, she said, that the coolness, which had sprung up between them, had been due to Randolph's prejudice against second marriages and stepmothers.

"Not that I ever heard him say even a slighting word of you but once," she hastens to add, "and then he said: 'Your grandmother, *as you call her*' (having occasion to mention you). I raised my finger warningly, and looked at him, and said: 'And well may I call her so.' He bowed and went on with his story."<sup>1</sup>

In this same letter, she declares that she regarded the charges in the will of 1821 "as the act of a madman," and she added that she had never thought of Randolph but as insane on many subjects since she "first had very personal intercourse with him," which was, she thought, in 1816. In this letter, too, Mrs. Bryan declares that Randolph always spoke of her father to her "in the most exalted and respectful terms," and never said one disrespectful word to her about her grandfather.

"On the contrary," she said, "in the latter years of my dear parent's life, he several times inquired kindly about him, and

<sup>1</sup> Eagle Point, Sept. 19, 1833, Bryan MSS.



sent him his good wishes most cordially. When I mentioned his illness and death, in reply he said: 'Your accounts are most distressing; I cannot reason away my feelings on the subject, though life has long been to him little but a burden. It is a mercy to God that he has had such a comforter as Mrs. Tucker.' I quote from memory, but the expressions are, I believe, *verbatim*. I tell you this to clear myself in your eyes. I would not for the world that you should think me capable of loving and respecting a man who I knew to be the slanderer of my grandfather."<sup>1</sup>

Bitter as the enmities of Randolph were, evidence can readily be brought forward to show that, long before his end, his feelings towards every one of the individuals who had been the subjects of them—Jefferson, Madison, Wm. B. Giles, Samuel Smith, John Quincy Adams, and St. George Tucker—had undergone a more or less softening change. Josiah Quincy, Jr., says that his father, Josiah Quincy, was the only friend that Randolph ever had with whom he did not quarrel first or last<sup>2</sup>; and Sawyer tells us that Randolph died almost friendless.<sup>3</sup> Nothing could be further from the truth than either statement, though the first certainly, and the second possibly, was made without malice. Throughout his life, Randolph was never without a circle of devoted friends, and, if he did not have as many at the end of his life as he had had in its earlier stages, that was simply the penalty which we all pay for living on after crossing over the ridge which separates the watershed of the River of Life from the watershed of the River of Death. When he wrote to his sister that no man ever poured out his whole soul both in friendship and love more freely than her poor old brother had done in his early days, he had no little reason for saying what he did, and he was simply reaping the just rewards of his constancy as

<sup>1</sup> Eagle Point, Sept. 19, 1833, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 266.

<sup>3</sup> P. 124.

a friend when he found himself in a position to declare, some 14 years later: "What an ill-starred wretch have I been through life—a not uneventful life—and yet how truly blest have I been in my friends; not one, no not one has ever betrayed me whom I have admitted into my *sanctum sanctorum*."<sup>1</sup> Sawyer says that the tenure of Randolph's friendship was too frail to render it sincere or ardent.<sup>2</sup> This statement too is entirely destitute of foundation. When W. J. Barksdale, who knew Randolph intimately, was asked in the Randolph will litigation whether it was not a trait of Randolph's character to be very variable in his friendships, he answered promptly: "According to my observation, not at all so."<sup>3</sup> The truth is that we cannot recall an instance in which Randolph ever gave his friendship and withdrew it, when sane, for reasons other than such as would be recognized by any fair-minded individual as good reasons for withdrawing it. He did not dull his palm with the entertainment of any new-fledged comrade, for he was too reserved to confer his confidence upon anyone hastily; but, friendship once given, its tie, at any rate until the irresponsibility of his latter years set in, was for him as indissoluble as the marriage tie usually was in Virginia.

"I never hazarded the wounding of a friend but to serve that friend," . . . he once wrote to his niece. "Banister, Bryan—they were my friends—Rutledge he is (or was) my friend. Never did I wound either of them; nor Wm. Leigh, nor will I ever. The people are my friends."<sup>4</sup>

Banister and Rutledge have already been introduced to the reader. When Randolph parted with Rutledge in

<sup>1</sup> The Hague, Aug. 8, 1826, Garland, v. 2, 271.

<sup>2</sup> P. 124.

<sup>3</sup> Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor. Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>4</sup> Mar. 30, 1828, Bryan MSS.

1796, he did not meet him again for a long stretch of years. In mentioning some of his friends to Dr. Brockenbrough, Randolph once said:

“Bryan, Benton, Rutledge—let me not forget him whom I knew before either of the others, although for the last 30 years we have met but once. The last letter that I received on my departure from Washington was from him. In the late election, he was the warm supporter of General Jackson, whom he personally knew and esteems, and I confess that the testimony of one whom I have known intimately for more than six and thirty years to be *sans peur et sans reproche*, and who is an observer and an excellent judge of mankind, weighs, as it ought to weigh, with me in favor of the veteran.”<sup>1</sup>

Long suspended, as personal intercourse between Randolph and Rutledge was, Rutledge's image never grew faint in Randolph's memory. Of this we need no better proof than the following letter, written after Rutledge's return to the United States from a foreign excursion:

“MY DEAR RUTLEDGE: When I got home from Richmond, a fortnight ago, Dr. Dudley informed me that he had, that very morning, sent letters for me to that place by my wagon—‘one from Rutledge.’ (I come a different road until within a few miles of my own house.) At length, ‘the heavy rolling wain’ has returned—a safer, and oftentimes a swifter, conveyance than the *Post*—and I have the pleasure to read your letter written on my birthday. I hope you will always celebrate it in the same way, and, as probably you never knew that important fact, or have forgotten it, I must inform you that it falls just two days before that of our sometime king, on the anniversary of whose nativity you tell me you had proposed to set out, or, as it is more elegantly expressed in our Doric idiom, ‘*to start*’ for the good old thirteen United States. I am too unwell and too much fatigued to say much more than to

<sup>1</sup> The Hague, Aug. 8, 1826, Garland, v. 2, 271.

express my disappointment at not seeing you on your Atlantic Pilgrimage. I knew that I did not lie in your route, and, altho' I had no right to expect such a deflection from your line of march, yet, somehow or other, joining an expression of one of your letters and my own wishes together, I made up a sort of not very confident hope of seeing you in my solitary cabin—'bag [and] baggage' as you say. I acknowledge that my construction of your language was strained, but, when once we have set our hearts upon anything, 'trifles light as air' serve our purpose as well as 'holy writ.' And so you have been given back like another Orpheus by the infernal regions—but without leaving your Eurydice behind you. I suspect you cast no 'longing, lingering look behind.' Pray tell me whether your Ixions of the West (whom I take to be true 'crackers') stopped their wheels, as you passed; or Tantalus forgot his thirst, and put by the untasted whiskey.

"You misapprehend me, or, what is more probable, I have expressed myself very incorrectly, if you impute to me the opinion that Burke, the great master of political philosophy, has been the model of our 4th of July orators and spouters in and out of Congress. I consider the style of Burke to be the most flexible that can be imagined, and nothing can be stiffer, not even our Russian Envoy, than the style we both condemn. But read a page of Fisher Ames, or a line of one of Quincy's speeches, and forget Burke, if you can. Sometimes, you have a mere echo, and, at all times, a wretched imitation. Of Curran, the ape of Grattan (who occasionally had Burke in his eye too) and of Phillips (the ape of Curran) whom we ape, I have already (I think) expressed my opinion. Grattan goes to the very farthest verge of propriety, and often oversteps the modesty of nature, but, if he had never said anything but what he delivered on the Irish propositions, he would stand with me in the foremost rank of orators. Speaking of the interdiction of the Commerce of Ireland beyond the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn he said—'It resembled a judgment of God rather than an act of legislature, whether measured by extent of space or infinity of duration—and had nothing human about it except its presumption!' This is not what Watts and his disciples call *reasoning*—but it is above it. No,

my dear Rutledge, if I am enthusiastic in anything, it is in admiration of Burke.

"Had I got your letter in time, I would have shot you flying somewhere between Fincastle and Winchester; (our Winchester). You must be so heavy on the wing that I could hit you as easily as a woodcock. I proposed going to our Sulphur Springs for a diseased liver, and it would have been killing two birds at once.

"Let me know your future movements, and, perhaps, I may contrive a meeting; when you will see an old, withered, weather-beaten, shrivelled creature, and look in vain for him you once knew. My best wishes attend Mrs. R. and your sister. Your children ought to think of me as one whom they have long known. Remember me to Middleton and his accomplished wife, and believe me, in the truest sense of the word,

"Your Friend,

"J. R. of Roanoke."<sup>1</sup>

Other early friends of Randolph were John Thompson and his brother, William Thompson. John Thompson was a young man of great promise, and created considerable stir in the last years of the 18th century by his newspaper publications on political topics, signed "Gracchus," "Cassius," and "Curtius"; and especially by a letter which he addressed to John Marshall, when he was a Federalist candidate for Congress in the Richmond District. To him it was that Randolph referred somewhat grandiosely in the debate on Gregg's Resolution as "the author of the immortal letters of Curtius." However, the thread of Thompson's life was slit too early by sour Atropos for anyone to say safely just what his future would have been. At any rate, even before Randolph became a member of Congress, this friend had the foresight to descry the fame that awaited him. Writing to William Thompson from Europe some months before the first election of Randolph to the House, he said: "Our friend John Randolph *offers*

<sup>1</sup> *So. Lit. Mess.* (Nov. 1856), pp. 380-382.

for Congress, and will probably be elected. He is a brilliant and noble young man. He will be an object of admiration and terror to the enemies of liberty."<sup>1</sup>

William Thompson was hardly less talented than his brother, but he was one of those clever, wayward, and convivial young men, so common in the social and political life of his time, who could never make any steady progress in the world because liquor was forever tripping up their heels. In 1798, he and Randolph walked over to the Virginia Mountains to visit Richard Kidder Meade, one of Randolph's relations; commencing their journey at Bizarre, with no *impedimenta* except a small bundle at the end of the cane carried by each.<sup>2</sup> Later, they returned to Bizarre in fine health and spirits, and Thompson went abroad, wandered over the face of Germany, studied medicine, and then abandoned it for the study of the law, and finally returned to Virginia.<sup>3</sup> A dissipated vagabond, he was rapidly squandering all his opportunities and sinking into the position of an irreclaimable outcast, when Randolph extended his hand to him, placed him under shelter at Bizarre, endeavored by every means in his power to rehabilitate him in the respect of others and his own self-respect, and expended upon him a measure of commingled patience and affection which did no little honor to the amiable side of his own character. Writing from Bizarre to Randolph on one occasion, Thompson says:

"MY DEAR BROTHER: Since you left us, I have been deeply engaged in what you advised. I have reviewed the Roman and Grecian history; I have done more; I have reviewed my own. Believe me, Jack, that I am less calculated for society than almost any man in existence. I am not perhaps a vain fool, but I have too much vanity, and I am too susceptible of flattery. I have that fluency which will attract attention

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 73.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

and receive applause from an unthinking multitude. Content with my superiority, I should be too indolent to acquire real, useful knowledge. I am stimulated by gratitude, by friendship and by love to make exertions now. I feel confident that you will view my foibles with a lenient eye; that you will see me prosper and in my progress be delighted."<sup>1</sup>

Was it with Judith that he was in love? The reader may make his own guess as we proceed. Of the relations between the two, while Thompson was at Bizarre, we have no information apart from Thompson and Randolph themselves, except a letter from Nancy Randolph to Mrs. Creed Taylor, in which she says that the fact that Thompson and Judith and "the girls" (probably the daughters of Mrs. Guilford Dudley) were out taking a walk had afforded her an opportunity to write to her friend.<sup>2</sup> The next time that Thompson swims into our ken is in an indignant and eloquent letter to Randolph in which he castigates with no little rhetorical vigor the injustice to which Randolph had been subjected in the matter of the assault made upon him at the play-house by Capt. McKnight and Lieut. Reynolds.<sup>3</sup>

While Thompson was at Bizarre, and Randolph was away from it, engaged with his Congressional duties, a regular correspondence was kept up between them. The following letter was written by Randolph from Philadelphia, when Congress was sitting in that city, in reply to one which he had received from Thompson:

"Above all, it [Thompson's letter] put my mind at ease upon a subject which has been productive of considerable concern. I mean your change of residence, which, as you will find by my last, I understood you had removed to Chinquepin Church. Not knowing your reasons for leaving Bizarre, I could not

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 73.

<sup>2</sup> Creed Taylor MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 1, 162.



combat [them]. Great, however, was my surprise and pleasure to receive a letter from Judy [Mrs. Richard Randolph] and yourself; both of which relieved my anxiety upon this head. I am, moreover, charmed, my friend, that you are resolutely bent upon study, and have made some progress therein. Let me conjure you to adhere inflexibly to this rational pursuit. Your destiny is in your own hands. Regular employment is of all medicines the most effectual for a wounded mind. If the sympathy of a friend, who loves you, because you are amiable and unfortunate; because you are the representative of that person [John Thompson] who held the first place in his heart, and the first rank in the intellectual order; if my uniform friendship, my dear Thompson, could heal the wounds of your heart, never should it know a pang. Your situation is of all others the one most eminently calculated to repair, so far as it is possible, the ills which you have sustained. An amiable woman, who regards you as a brother, who shares your griefs, and will administer as far as she can to your consolation . . . such a woman is under the same roof with you. Cultivate a familiarity with her; each day will give you new and unexpected proof of the strength of her mind, and the extent of her information. Books you have at command; your retirement is unbroken. Such a situation is, in my opinion, the best calculated for a young man (under any circumstances) who will study; or even for one who is determined to be indolent. Female society, in my eye, is an indispensable requisite in forming the manly character. That which is offered to you is not to be paralleled, perhaps, in the world. You call on me, my friend, for advice. You bid me regard your foibles with a lenient eye; you anticipate the joy which I shall derive from your success. I will not permit myself to doubt of it. You shall succeed—you must. You have it in your power. Exertion only is necessary. You owe it to the memory of our departed brother, to yourself, to me, to your country, to humanity! Apprised that you have foibles to eradicate, the work is more than half accomplished. I will point them out with a friendly yet lenient hand. You will not shrink from the probe, knowing that, in communicating present pain, your ultimate cure and safety is the object of the friendly operator.



If I supposed myself capable of inflicting intentional and wanton pain upon your feelings, I should shrink with abhorrence from myself. In the course of my strictures, I may, perhaps, appear abrupt. I am now pressed for time.

“ Self-examination, when cool and impartial, is the best of all correctives. It is a general and trite observation that man knows his fellows better than himself. This is too true; but it depends upon every individual to exhibit, in himself, a refutation of this received maxim. Retirement and virtuous society fit the mind for this task.

“ Among your foibles, I have principally observed unsteadiness; a precipitate decision, and the want of mature reflection, *generally*. It would be uncandid to determine your character by these traits, which originate, perhaps, [in], or are, at least, heightened by, the uneasiness which preys upon your mind; which renders you more than usually restless. Endeavor, my friend, to act less upon momentary impulse; pause, reflect; think much and speak little; form a steadiness of demeanor, and, having once resolved, persevere. Read, but do not devour, books. Compare your information; digest it. In short, according to the old proverb, ‘Make haste slowly.’ There is one point upon which I must enjoin you to beware. You appeared restless, when I saw you, to change your property. Let things stand as they are a little. *Facilis descensus, sed revocare gradum, hoc opus*. (Excuse, I beseech you, this pitiful display of learning.)

“ The Duc de la Rochefoucault—who, by the by, is a bad moral preceptor—has, among others, this very excellent maxim: ‘We are never made so ridiculous by the qualities we possess as by those which we affect to have.’ I never knew a man who would not profit of this observation. To preserve your own esteem, merit it. I have no fear that you will ever render yourself unworthy of its greatest good. Yet, a man who is so unfortunate as to lose his own good opinion, is wrong to despair. It may be retrieved. He ought to set about it immediately, as the only reparation which he can make to himself or society. The ill opinion of mankind is often misplaced; *but our own of ourselves never*.

“ Pardon, my dear brother, this pedantic and didactic letter.

Its sententiousness is intolerable, yet it was almost unavoidable. I had written till my fingers were cramped. The hour of closing the mail approached, and I was obliged to throw my sentiments into the offensive form of dogmas. That I, who abound in foibles, and, to speak truth, *vices*—that I should pretend to dogmatize, may appear to many arrogant indeed. Yet, let them recollect that we are all frail, and should sustain each other; and that the truth of a precept is not determined by the practice of him who promulges it. Go on, my dear Thompson, and prosper. I regret that I am debarred the pleasure of sharing your literary labors, and of that interchange of sentiment which constitutes one of the chief sources of my enjoyment. To our amiable sister—for such she considers herself with respect to you—I commit you, confident that your own exertion, aided by her society, will form you such as your friend will rejoice to behold you. Write to him frequently, I beseech you; cheer his solitary and miserable existence with the well known characters of friendship. Adieu, my dear brother.”<sup>1</sup>

To this letter Thompson replied in the following terms:

“DEAR JACK,: I am not ceremonious. I feel a conviction that your silence does not proceed from a want of regard, but from a cause more important to the world, to yourself, and, if possible, more distressing to me than the loss of that place in your heart, on which depends my future prosperity. I had fondly hoped that the change of scene, and the novelty of business, would have dissipated that melancholy which overhung you. To see my friend return happy and well, was the only wish of my heart.

“To the man, who is not devoted to unnatural dissipations, a great city has no charms; it awakens the most painful sensations in the breast of the philanthropist and patriot. It is disgusting to behold such a mass of vice, and all its attendant deformities, cherished in the bosom of an enlightened country. Prostitutions of body, and still greater prostitution of mind excite our pity and hatred. The political life has not those

<sup>1</sup> Phila., Dec. 31, 1800, Garland, v. 1, 166.

attractions to the virtuous which it once had, and which it ought still to have in this country. The spirit of party has extinguished the spirit of liberty. The enlightened orator must be shocked at the willing stupidity of his auditors. Our exertions are vain and impotent. Every man is the avowed friend of a party. Converts to reason are not to be found; whilst converts to interest are innumerable.

"You know I promised not to visit Richmond. I have rigidly adhered to that. I felt a necessity of cooling down. I foreboded the acquirement of dissipated habits, which would haunt me unceasingly. I saw that the patronage of the virtuous would awaken an emulation in me to attain their perfection. I feel confident that, if my friends bear a little longer with my foibles, they will be corrected. I look forward with honest pride to the day when I shall merit their regard—when, by my conduct and by my principles, I shall make some retribution for the exalted generosity which I have met with from your family. I am not made of such stern stuff as to resist singly; but the idea of friendship will steel my heart against temptation. Since you left me, I have been generally at *home*, conscious how little I merit regard. That which I feel for your amiable family may perhaps appear presumption, yet the thought of losing it is stinging. . . . To your sister, your most amiable sister, I try to render myself agreeable. There is a gentleness of manners, an uniformity of conduct, and a majesty of virtue, which seem to render admiration presumptuous."<sup>1</sup>

The next letter in the correspondence is this one from Randolph to Thompson:

"Your letter, my dear Thompson, has communicated to my heart a satisfaction to which it has not been at all familiar. It has proved beyond dispute that the energies of your mind, however neglected by yourself, or relaxed by misfortune, have been suspended, but not impaired; and that the strength of your understanding has not been unequal to the ordeal of misfortune, of which few are calculated to bear the test. Proceed, my friend, in the path in which you now move; justify those

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 169.

lively hopes which I have never ceased to entertain, or to express, of your future attainments: in the words, although not in the sense, of the poet, let me exhort you, '*carpe diem.*' The past is not in our power to recall. The future we can neither foresee nor control. The present alone is at our disposal: on the use to which it is applied depends the whole of what is estimable or amiable in human character."<sup>1</sup>

The moral atmosphere at Bizarre proved too highly rarefied for Thompson; for, in the early part of the year 1800, he went off to Petersburg, and, while there became involved in an amour which he disclosed in a letter to Randolph upon his return to Bizarre:

"You will be surprised, dear brother," he said, "when you are informed that my stay in Petersburg was protracted by a circumstance against which you warned me in a letter sometime past. I allude to Mrs. B.—. Nature has compensated for mental imperfection by bodily perfection in that woman. And my attachment to her corroborates a heresy in love that desire is a powerful ingredient. Her mind is not cultivated, her disposition is not calculated to make a man of my enthusiasm in regard *happy*. Fully aware of these circumstances, I cherished her name as dear. Thus situated, let me ask you a question. Had you been told—nay, had you known that this woman was the victim of infamous oppression—that these charms had been wrested from your possession by unfeeling relations, that your name was dear, her husband's name odious, that on you she looked with tenderness, and on him with hatred, what line of conduct would you adopt? . . . I had resolved to shun her, and in truth did; but that fate, which shows refinement in its policy, forced me to an interview. . . . After several resolutions, some ridiculous (as is usual in such cases), and one which had near proved fatal, I fled to the asylum of the distressed (wisely thought of), to the spot where tender friendship [founded on?] a character exalted to a height, which makes the feebleness of her sex look low indeed,

<sup>1</sup> Garland, 170.

would make me blush at my folly, and banish the idea of a baneful passion. I will not recapitulate the wrongs of fortune, but I fondly hope that they will plead in apology for the failings of your friend."<sup>1</sup>

And these were the dissuasives that Randolph in his reply brought to bear upon his friend:

"April 19, 24 year.—Today I received your letter of the 12th. It has unravelled a mystery, for whose solution I have before searched in vain. That you should have been in Petersburg, sighing at the feet of the fair Mrs. B., is what I did not expect to learn, since I supposed you all the while in Sussex. I am now not at all surprised at your silence, during this period of amorous intoxication; since nothing so completely unfits a man for intercourse with any other than the object of his infatuation.

"The answer to your questions is altogether easy. In the first place, it is not true, because it cannot be true, that this lady was compelled to the step which she has taken. What *force* could be brought to act upon her, which materials as hard as wax would not resist? The truth is, if ever she felt an attachment to you, she sacrificed it to avarice; not because money was the end, but the means, of gratification; her vanity, the ruling passion of every mind as imbecile as her own, delighted in the splendor which wealth alone could procure. At this time, the same passion, which is one of the vilest modifications of self-love, would gratify itself with a little coquetry; and, if your prudence has not exceeded that of the lady, it has gone, I fear, greater lengths than she at first apprehended. Nor have you, my friend, done this woman a good office, in rendering her discontented with her lot by suffering her to persuade herself that she is in love with you, and that oppression alone has driven her to a detested union with a detestable brute; for such (on all hands, I believe, it is agreed) is Mr. B. Never did I see a woman apparently better pleased with her situation. She did not lose one pennyweight of her very comfortable quantity of flesh; and, however she *might have hesitated between* my friend and the cash, minus the possessor, had you

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. I, 171.

been on the spot to contest your right to her very fair hand, yet W. T., on the other side of the Atlantic, or perhaps at the bottom of it, was no rival to the *solid* worth of her now *caro sposo*. Perhaps, in the first instance, she might have disliked the man, for good reasons; and, in the second, for no reason at all, but because her relations were very anxious for the match; but be assured her imagination was not sufficiently lively to induce her *to shed one tear* on your account.

“You ask me, my friend, what conduct you ought to pursue; and you talk of revenge. B. has never injured you; he has acted like a fool, I grant, in marrying a woman whose only inducement to the match, he must be conscious, was his wealth; but he has committed no crime; at least he was unconscious of any. That the fellow should wear antlers, is no great matter of regret, because the *os frontis* is certainly substantial enough to bear the weight. Yet I do not wish them to be planted by you, *for your sake*. I will allow that this lady is as fair as she is *fat*—that she is a very inviting object; yet why should you prevent her leading a life of as much happiness as she is susceptible of—*fruges consumere*, &c. Has not her conduct in relation to *you* and to her husband been such as renders her unworthy of any man of worth? Has he not conferred on you a benefit by preventing the possibility of an alliance with a woman capable of carrying on a correspondence with any other than her husband; and can you, who enjoy the society of . . ., that pattern of female virtue, feel for this woman any sentiment but contempt? So far from injuring you, B. is the injured person, if at all. His impenetrable stupidity has alone shielded him from sensations not the most enviable, I imagine. Do not suppose from my style that I am unfeeling, or have too low an estimate of the sex; on the contrary, I am the warmest of their admirers. But silly and depraved women, and stupid, unprincipled men, are both objects of my pity and contempt. I wish you to form a just estimate of what is valuable in female character; then seek out a proper object and marry. Intrigue will blast your reputation, and, what is more to the purpose, your peace of mind; it will be a stumbling-block to you through life. An acquaintance with loose women has incapacitated you from forming a proper

estimate of female worth. . . . I must congratulate you on your escape, and on your resolution to behold no more the fascinating object which has caused you so much uneasiness. I shall shortly have the pleasure of embracing you. . . .

"P.S. I have been so hurried as perhaps to betray myself into an inaccuracy of expression. But let me suggest two ideas to you. Has not your conduct been such as to injure a woman for whom you have felt and professed a regard? Is it a liberal or disinterested passion (passion is never liberal or disinterested) which risks the reputation of the beloved object? Has not her conduct in admitting your attentions rendered her unworthy of any man but her present possessor? View this matter in its proper light and you will never think more of her. . . . Success attend your study of the law."<sup>1</sup>

The next letter from Thompson to Randolph was written a few weeks after this letter from Randolph to him. It was as follows:

"What are my emotions, dearest brother, at seeing your horse thus far on his way to return you among us! How eagerly do I await the appointed day! Ryland [Randolph] has returned, and another of the children of misfortune will seek refuge and consolation under this hospitable roof. He has promised me by letter to be with us in a day or two. What pleasure do I anticipate in the society of our incomparable sister, in yours, in Ryland's! I wish I had the vanity to suppose I was worthy of it.

"We have been visited by the young ladies of Liberty Neck, and by its mentor, Major Scott. I had rather have his wisdom than Newton's or Locke's; for depend on it, he has dipped deep in the science of mind. According to the laws of gallantry, I should have escorted them to Amelia; but I am not fitted for society, and the continued round of company in the Neck is painful instead of pleasing.

"Our sister is now asleep; she would have written but for her being busy in finishing the children's clothes, and being obliged to write to Mrs. Harrison. When I came in last even-

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 171.



ing, I found her in the passage, a candle on the chair, sewing. I could hardly help exclaiming, what a pattern for her sex! The boys are well; they have both grown—the Saint particularly, whose activity will astonish you. Everybody is cheerful; your arrival in anticipation is the cause. Farewell, dearest brother; hasten to join us.

“W. THOMPSON.”

“Take care how you ride Jacobin, and, if not for your own, at least for our, sakes. Run no risks by putting him in a carriage. We all dread the attempt.”<sup>1</sup>

This letter indicates that the febrifuge had not been without effect, and that Thompson was once more a votary of virtue. In the meantime, however, of course, the neighborhood gossips were saying that Thompson was insensible neither to Judith’s personal charms nor to her admirable house-keeping, and was lingering at Bizarre with a view to convincing her that a second marriage was the best solace for the untimely termination of the first. Thompson’s position became so uncomfortable that there was nothing left for him to do but to make off from Bizarre on his high stilts, and to write the following letter to Randolph:

“The letter which I have transmitted by the same opportunity to that most amiable of women, our sister, communicates intelligence of a report, the effects of which on my mind you will be fully aware of, from a former conversation on the subject. Would you suppose, my dearest brother, that the world would have dared to insinuate that my object in remaining at Bizarre is to solicit the affections of our friend! Time, and the apprehension that I shall be intruded on, compel me to conciseness. My abode will be Ryland’s until I receive letters from you both. View the subject with impartiality, enter into my feelings, for you know my heart, tell me with candor whether I am not bound to leave the abode of

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 173.



innocence and friendship? Tell me whether refined friendship does not demand on my part a sacrifice of every prospect of happiness, to the amiable, to the benevolent and virtuous woman who is wronged from her generous sympathy to the hapless."<sup>1</sup>

This letter placed Randolph in a very embarrassing situation, but his sublimated friendship for Thompson was equal even to its requirement.

"For the first time," he replied, "I perceive myself embarrassed how to comply with the requisition of friendship. But yesterday, and I should have been unable to comprehend the speculative possibility of that which today is reduced to practice. If I decline the task which you have allotted me, it is not because I am disposed to shrink from the sacred obligations which I owe to you. My silence is not the effect of unfeeling indifference, of timid indecision, or cautious reserve. It is the result of the firmest conviction that it is not for *me* to advise you in the present crisis. It is a task to which I am indeed unequal. Consult your own heart, it is *alone* capable of advising you. The truly fraternal regard, which you feel for our most amiable sister, does not require to be admonished of the respect which is due to her feelings. You alone are a competent judge of that conduct which is best calculated not to wound her delicacy; and it is that alone which you are capable of pursuing. Whatever may be your determination, you will not be the less dear to me. That spirit of impertinent malice, which mankind seem determined to cherish at the expense of all that should constitute their enjoyment, may, indeed, intrude upon our arrangements and deprive me of your society; but it can never rob me of the pure attachment which I have conceived for you, and which can never cease to animate me. I hold this portion of good, at least, in contempt of an unfeeling and calumnious world. Invulnerable to every shaft, it derides their impotent malice.

"Let me suggest to you to pursue that line of conduct which you shall be disposed to adopt, as if it were the result of your

<sup>1</sup> Garland, 175.

previous determination. Prosecute, therefore, your intended journey, and do not permit malicious curiosity to enjoy the wretched satisfaction of supposing that *IT* has the power of influencing your actions.

"I have perceived with extreme pleasure that your mind has for some time been rapidly regaining its pristine energy. Keep it, therefore, I beseech you, my friend, in constant exercise. Get up some object of pursuit. Make to yourself an image, and, in defiance of the decalogue, worship it. Whether it be excellence in medicine or law, or political eminence, determine not to relax your endeavors until you have attained it. You must not suffer your mind, whose activity must be employed, to prey upon *itself*. The greatest blessing, which falls to the lot of man, is thus converted into the deadliest curse. I need not admonish you to keep up the intercourse which subsists between us, and which nothing shall compel me to relinquish.

"I trust that I shall hear from you in the space of a week at farthest. Meanwhile rest assured of the undiminished affection of the firmest of your friends."<sup>1</sup>

But Thompson never came back to Bizarre as a home; soon lapsed into his old vagabond, dissipated courses, and could think of nothing better to do than to wander off on a long pedestrian excursion to Canada.<sup>2</sup> Degraded, however, as he was, Randolph did not forsake him, even though he manifested a disposition to keep entirely aloof from his friend.

"Whatever may be the motives which have determined you to renounce all intercourse with me," Randolph wrote to him, when his fortunes and his reputation were at their lowest ebb, "it becomes me, perhaps, to respect them; yet to be deterred from my present purpose by punctilio would evince a coldness of temper which I trust does not belong to me, and would, at the same time, convict me to myself of the most pitiful insincerity, in professing for you a regard which has never been

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 176.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 177.

inferior to my professions, and which [it] is not in any circumstance entirely to destroy. To tell you that during the last three months I have observed your progress through life with uninterrupted and increasing anxiety, would be to give you a faint idea of what has passed in my mind. The mortification, which I have experienced, on hearing you spoken of in terms of frigid and scanty approbation, can only be exceeded by that which I have felt on the silent embarrassment which my inquiries have occasioned those who were unwilling to wound your character or my feelings. You know me too well, William, to suppose that my inquiries have been directed by the miserable spirit which seeks to exalt itself in the depression of others. They have, on the contrary, been very few, and made with the most guarded circumspection. To say the truth, I have never felt myself equal to the task of hearing the recital of details which were too often within my reach, and which not unfrequently courted my attention. They have always received from me the most decisive repulse. My own pride would never bear the humiliation of permitting any one to witness the mortification which I felt. After all this preamble, let me endeavor to effect the purpose of this address. Let me beg of you to ask yourself what are your present pursuits, and how far congenial to your feelings or character. I have not, I cannot, so far have mistaken you; you cannot so successfully have deceived yourself. Yours is not the mind which can derive any real or lasting gratification from the pursuits or the attainments of a grovelling ambition. These may afford a temporary and imperfect relief from that voice which tells you who you are and what is expected from you. The world is well disposed to forgive the aberrations of youthful indiscretion from the straight road of prudence; but there is a point beyond which its temper can no longer be played upon. After a certain degree of resistance, it becomes more prone to asperity than it had ever been to indulgence. But grant that its good nature were unlimited, you are not the character who can be content to hold by so humiliating a tenure that which you can and ought to demand of right. Can you be content to repose on the courtesy of mankind for that respect which you may challenge as your due, and which may be enforced when with-

held? Can you quit the high ground and imposing attitude of self-esteem to solicit the precarious bounty of a contemptuous and contemptible world? I can scarcely forgive myself for dwelling so long on so invidious a theme. I have long meditated to address you on this subject. One of the dissuasives from the plan is now removed. Let me again conjure you to ask yourself seriously: what are your present objects of pursuit? How far any laudable acquirement can be attained by a town residence, particularly in a tavern? Whether such a life be compatible with the maintenance of that respectability of character which is necessary to give us value in the eyes of others or of ourselves? And let me conjure you to dissolve by a single exertion the spell which now enchains you. The only tie which could have bound you is no more. Town fetters are but those of habit, and that of but short standing. Were it confirmed, there would indeed be but little hope, and this letter would never have been penned. As it would be improper to urge the dissolution of your present plan of life without pointing out some alternative, I recommend a residence of twelve or eighteen months with Taylor, and a serious application, before it be too late, to that profession which will be a friend to you when the sunshine insects who have laughed with you in your prosperity shall have passed away with the genial season which gave them birth. The hour is fast approaching, be assured, when it will be in vain to attempt the acquirement of professional knowledge. Too well I know that readiness of apprehension and sprightliness of imagination will not make amends for application. The latter serves but to light up our ignorance.

“There is one topic on which I cannot trust even my pen. Did I not believe that this letter would occasion you pain, it certainly never had been written. Yet to write it with that view would be a purpose truly diabolical. You are a physician; you probe not the wounds of the dead. Yet 'tis to heal, and not to agonize, that you insert your instrument into the living body. Whatever may be the effect of this attempt, whatever may be the disposition which it creates in you, I shall never, while you live, cease to feel an interest in your fate. Every one here remembers you with undiminished affection. If I

judge from myself, you are more than ever interesting to them, and whenever, if ever, you revisit Bizarre, you will recognize in every member of the family your unchanged friends. Adieu, J. R., Jr."<sup>1</sup>

It is said that this generous letter had its effect. Be this as it may, after spending a few months with Creed Taylor in the vicinity of Bizarre, Thompson repaired to Richmond and read law in the office of George Hay. When he had completed his course of study, Randolph procured a public position for him in the Territory of Louisiana, and, in the spring of 1804, while he was on his way to his post, after marrying an estimable wife, sent him this Godspeed:

"When I requested you to inquire at the post-office at Abingdon for a letter from me, it did not occur to me by how circuitous a route my communication must travel before it could reach that place. To guard against accidents, therefore, I have directed it to be forwarded to Nashville, in case you should have left Abingdon before its arrival there. We have been every day suggesting to ourselves the inconvenience to which you must have been exposed by the bad weather which we have invariably experienced ever since your departure, and regretting that the situation of your affairs would not permit you to continue with us until a change took place. You, however, my good friend, have embarked upon too serious a voyage to take into consideration a little rough weather upon the passage. The wish which I feel to add my mite to the counsels, through which alone it can prove prosperous, is repressed by the reflection that your success depends upon the *discovery* of no *new principle* of human affairs, but upon the *application* of such as are familiar to all, and which none know better how to estimate than yourself. Decision, firmness, independence, which equally scorns to yield our own rights as to detract from those of others, are the only guides to the esteem of the world, or of ourselves. A reliance upon our

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 206.

resources for all things, but especially for relief against that arch-fiend, the *taedium vitae*, can alone guard us against a state of dependence and contempt. But I am growing sententious, and, of course, pedantic. Judy joins me in every good wish to yourself and Mrs. Thompson. Permit me to add that there is one being in the world who will ever be ready to receive you with open arms, whatsoever may be the fate of the laudable endeavors which you are now making."<sup>1</sup>

But this letter proved only a last sad *viaticum* for poor Thompson, who died before his journey was completed, leaving Randolph, after all his unselfish efforts to set him on his feet, nothing to do except to endorse on the letter which we have just reproduced, when in some manner it had come back into his hands, the brief but all significant words: "W. T. May 13, 1804. Alas!"<sup>2</sup>

There are several references to Maria Ward in Thompson's letters to Randolph. This is one:

"In our lives, my brother, we have seen two fine women (Mrs. Judith Randolph and Miss M—a W—d); never extend your list; never trust your eyes or your ears, for they stand alone."

And this is another:

"M—a the amiable, the good M—a, has honored me with a short letter; such tokens of esteem, such evidences of generous pity, for a man cast on the wide world, unfriended and unprotected, create a gratitude not to be expressed. It is not until we are humiliated by misfortune that we feel these things, for, in the height of worldly prosperity, the wish and the pursuit go hand in hand, and successive gratifications blunt the sensibilities of our nature. Whilst we rejoice in a mortality as the termination of lives mutually painful, in which we have been called on to exercise a fortitude sufficient to overwhelm minds less noble and less firm, in which every fair prospect has

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 209.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, v. 1, 210.

been blighted, every brilliant expectation thwarted, and every tender emotion hatefully disappointed, let us linger out a remnant which cannot be long, mutually cherishing and supporting each other on the tedious road. My dear friend, let us not leave each other behind; for, alas! how sterile and how barren would creation then be! United, we are strong, but unsupported we could not stand against the increasing pressure of misfortune. Often do I exclaim, would that you and I were cast on some desert island, there to live out the remainder of our days unpolluted by the communication with man. Separated from each other, our lips are sealed, for the expression of sentiments which exalt and ennoble humanity. Even in the support of virtue the cautious language of vice must be adopted; even in the defence of truth we must descend to the artifice of error."<sup>1</sup>

A very different sort of friend from William Thompson was Joseph Bryan, who strode about on his own honest, sturdy legs and scorned stilts of any kind. He was such a character as Sir Walter Scott would have loved to portray; bluff, hearty, affectionate, choleric, vehement, and even violent, but cool in the face of peril, and quick to make generous atonement for any injury inflicted by his impetuosity. Nor was his vigorous mind, improved by an European education and not unimproved by familiarity with good books, one to be despised. "The character of Mr. Bryan was every way original," we are told in an obituary notice of him written by Randolph. "He was himself and no one else at second hand." A person that might have served as a model to the statuary, wonderful activity and strength of body, united to undaunted resolution, generosity as conspicuous as the robust, unflinching manhood with which it was associated, fidelity in friendship, unimpeachable integrity, and a mind of the first order, stored with various, but desultory, reading, are the endowments attributed by this notice to Bryan.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 183.

<sup>2</sup> Bryan MSS.



After serving for three sessions, as a representative from Georgia in the House, with Randolph, he resigned his seat because his father-in-law, a resident of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, to whom he refers in one of his letters to Randolph as "ye old Hidalgo on the Sassafras,"<sup>1</sup> had announced his intention of paying him a visit at his distant home; which was on a sea island near Savannah.

After the death of Bryan, his wife returned all the letters written to him by Randolph to the latter. They perished, we suppose, at the hands of Judge Leigh; but many of the letters written by Bryan to Randolph are still in existence, and they are as fresh and animated as if the writer had penned them but yesterday.

They make manifest, first of all, the fact that Bryan admired and loved Randolph as intensely as his son John Randolph Bryan did after him. He died on Sept. 5, 1812, and among his letters to Randolph was one written just a little over a year before in which he said: "God bless you and yours, is the prayer of your friend, who may, in some respects, be compared to Dryden's Hind, unchanging and unchanged."<sup>2</sup>

Bryan's letters cover quite a wide range of topics. One of the earliest, written in January, 1800, informed Randolph, who had recently become a member of Congress, that he was about to embark soon for England and wished him to secure certificates of citizenship for himself and a companion from President Jefferson.<sup>3</sup> In another letter, written shortly after this one, he gave Randolph his reasons for leaving the United States.

"I have in that time, [the preceding twelve months] my friend," he said, "been on the verge of becoming a member of the fraternity of Benedicts, as you humorously style married men. In short, I paid my addresses to an accomplished young

<sup>1</sup> June 11, 1809, *Id.*

<sup>2</sup> July 14, 1811, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 1, 177.



woman, of both family and fortune, in Carolina—quarrelled with my father and mother because I would not relinquish the pursuit—followed her with every prospect of the desired success for eighteen months—went to her abode last Christmas with the comfortable idea of marrying her on the commencement of the new year—and was discarded by her parents because mine would not consent to the match. There were one or two other trifling objections, such as—I was a —, a man of no religion—a Georgian; and would take their child where they might never see her face again, &c. All this you may think apocryphal!—’tis true, upon my word. Yet ‘my heart does not bleed at every pore from the bitterest of recollections’; to be sure I was in a hell of a taking for two or three days. But I found that keeping myself employed made it wear off to a miracle. So much for my love affairs. You may perhaps be a little surprised at my going to England; ’twas a sudden resolution, I must confess; I’ll tell you how it happened. While I was laboring under the horrors of my dismissal, I swore to my little grisette, in order to melt her, that, if she would not quit father and mother and run away with me, I would go off immediately and fight the Russians! She would not do that, so I am obliged by a point of honor to make the attempt at least.”<sup>1</sup>

When this letter was written, Bryan expected to sail from Savannah about Feb. 20, 1800. Through the rather grandiose diction of the reply which Randolph made to it, we can discern the first stages of the melancholia, of which he was afterwards to be so frequently the prey.

“Bryan, my friend,” he said, “you are about to render yourself, me, all who are interested in your happiness, wretched, perhaps, for ever. These are more numerous than you are at present willing to allow. At one stroke, you are about to sever all those ties which bind you to the soil which gave you birth, to the tender connections of your childhood, to the most constant of friends—relations which give to existence its only

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. I. 177.

value. Your sickly taste loathes that domestic happiness which is yet in store for you—perhaps you deny that it can have for yourself any existence; you prefer to it, *trash* of foreign growth. You seek in vain, my friend, to fly from misery. It will accompany you—it will rankle in that heart in whose cruel wounds it rejoices to dwell. It is of no country, but *yourself*, and time alone can soothe its rage.

“Among the dangers you are about to encounter, I will not enumerate those of a personal nature; not because they are in themselves contemptible, however they may be despised by yourself, but because, in comparison to the gigantic mischiefs which you are about to court, they are indeed significant. I mean in respect to yourself—to your friends they are but too formidable. Recall then, I beseech you, your rash determination—pause, at least, upon the rash step which you meditate! It is, however, the privilege of friendship *only to advise*. The certificates which you require, I will endeavor to procure [in] time enough to accompany this letter. This is Saturday, and, after the hour of doing business at the offices; and, to be valid, they must issue from that of the Secretary of State. Be not impatient, they shall be forwarded by Tuesday’s mail, *in any event*; letters from Jefferson to some of his European friends shall follow them. . . .

“I, too, am wretched; misery is not your exclusive charter. I have for some months meditated a temporary relinquishment of my country. The execution of this scheme has no connection with yours. The motives which produced it originated in events which happened before I took my seat in Congress, although I was then ignorant of their existence; they were, indeed, prior to my election to an office, of which nothing but a high sense of the obligations of public duty has prevented the resignation. A second election could not in that event have been practicable, until the present session was somewhat advanced. I determined, therefore, not to relinquish my seat until its expiration; then to resign it, and bid adieu to my native shores for a few years, at least. In this determination I still remain. If, therefore, you refuse to rescind your hasty resolution, I desire permission to be the companion of your voyage—to partake your sorrows and to share with you my

own—to be the friend of him who is to accompany you, because he is *yours*. Yet, believe me, Joe, and it is unnecessary to declare by what motives I am influenced to the assertion, that I shall be glad to hear that I am to prosecute my voyage alone—to be informed that you have receded from a project which has not, like my own, been the fruit of deliberate resolve. I have indeed hoped that the relation of your own domestic enjoyment would have beguiled many a sad hour of my life. But, pardon me, my dear fellow, I see my indiscretion. It shall not be repeated.

“If, then, you persist in carrying into execution your plan, take a passage with your friend for New York, or the Delaware, it is open; meet me here about the middle of March—we rise in April—there is a resolution laid upon our table to adjourn on the first of the month; it will certainly be carried; they even talk of substituting ‘March.’ We will then embark together for any part of the other continent that you may prefer; I am indifferent about places. But if I go alone, I shall take shipping for some English port, London or Liverpool. I wish I could join you in Savannah; but it would be extremely inconvenient. I fear the climate; a passage would be more uncertain too from thence, and the accommodations perhaps not so good. Yet I will even meet you there, or in Charleston, in case you are resolved to leave America, if I can have your company on no other terms. Write immediately and solve this business. I repeat, that it will be very inconvenient to take my passage from a southern port; it will likewise occasion delay. I shall have a voyage to make thither, and then to wait the sailing of a vessel; whereas, if you meet me here, I can fix myself for any ship bound to Europe about the time of the rising of Congress; and in the great ports of New York, Philadelphia, or Baltimore, we cannot fail to procure a speedy embarkation, and agreeable berths. Again I entreat you to write to me immediately upon the receipt of this: in expectation of the answer, I shall remain under no common anxiety until its arrival. Meantime, remember, my friend, that there is one person, at least, and he an unshaken friend who is not insensible to your worth. Farewell, dear Joseph.

“P. S. I had like to have omitted enjoining you to preserve



**MARIA WARD**

*From the portrait owned by William Everard Meade, Danville, Va.*



inviolable secrecy with respect to my designs. The reason I will detail to you at meeting. It is unnecessary to say that they are not such as I should be ashamed to avow; yet I do not wish it to be known that I am about to leave the country until a week or ten days before my departure. Adieu!''<sup>1</sup>

This letter did not reach Bryan in time to alter his intention of sailing from Savannah, and, in consequence, Randolph's first voyage to Europe was deferred until the year 1822.

When Bryan returned from Europe, it was only, of course, to fall in love again; this time with Delia Forman, the daughter of General Forman, of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, who had become an intimate friend of Randolph, doubtless through his intercourse with Joseph H. Nicholson. This was after Bryan, at the solicitation of Randolph, had been first an unsuccessful, and then a successful, candidate for a seat in the House of Representatives,<sup>2</sup> where he gave Randolph his whole-hearted support, when the latter was hacking the heads of the Yazoo hydra. Subsequent to his return from Europe, he was at least once a guest at Bizarre, and it was from this place that Randolph wrote to him on Sept. 8, 1804, to this effect:

"Should this find you at Wilmington, which I heartily wish it may not, I trust, my dear Bryan, that you will derive the most satisfactory information from the inclosed respecting your fair tyrant. To me the Major says not a word on the subject of his daughter, but I infer from a variety of circumstances that she is about this time on a visit to her aunt, Mrs. Van Bibber, in Gloucester, about eighty miles from Richmond: I hope, therefore, very soon to see you in Virginia.

"I have nothing worth relating, except that Mrs. Randolph was almost as much disappointed as myself when our messenger arrived last night from the post-office without a

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 179.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 210.

letter from you. How easy would it be, once a week, to say 'I am at such a place, in such health, and tomorrow shall go to ——.' These little bulletins of your well-being and motions would be a thousand times more interesting to me than those of his Britannic Majesty's health, or his Corsican Highness's expeditions. Let me beg of you to make dispatch."<sup>1</sup>

The next thing that the correspondence between Bryan and Randolph discloses is the fact that Bryan is in Chestertown on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and writing to Randolph with all the unrestrained joy of the sheer love of living:

"You will hardly believe me when I tell you that my tyrants have had the unparalleled barbarity to postpone my marriage until the 25th of this month," he said. "Sumptuousness, pomp, parade, &c., must be observed in giving away a jewel worth more than the kingdoms of this world. I rather suspect I shall be myself the most awkward and ungraceful movable used on the occasion: curse it, I hate to be exhibited; and nothing but the possession of the jewel itself would induce me to run the gauntlet of felicitation I shall receive from the whole file of collaterals.—Lovely as her person is, I prize her heart more. Jack! What have I done to induce the good God to favor me so highly? Sinner that I am, I deserve not the smallest of his gifts, and behold I am treated more kindly than even Abraham, who saw God face to face, and was called his friend; he, poor fellow, had to put up with his sister Sarah, who, beside other exceptionable qualities, was cursed with a bad temper; while I, having sought among the beauties of the earth, have found and obtained the loveliest and best; which I am willing to prove against all comers on foot or on horseback, in the tented field with sword and spear, or on the roaring ocean at the cannon's mouth. If you will come and see us [in Georgia], my Delia will make one of her best puddings for your entertainment. In the course of a year or two, you may expect to see your friend *Brain* metamorphosed into a gentleman of high polish, able to make as spruce a bow and to hand a

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 211.

lady to her carriage with all the graces of an Adonis. Adieu! may heaven prosper and bless you."<sup>1</sup>

In other letters from Bryan to Randolph, there are references to Randolph's quarrel with the Jefferson administration, and they indicate that the former had fully grasped the unhappy effect which it might have upon Randolph's political future. "You have passed the Rubicon, and Madison or yourself must down," he wrote in 1806.<sup>2</sup> He consoled himself, however, with the reflection that if Randolph fell, he could only cease to be Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means. "They can hurt you no more," he said, "let them rain heaven and earth." In a subsequent letter, he said very sensibly:

"I fear too that there is a systematic arrangement made from Maine to Georgia to deprive you of the influence you have obtained in consequence of your long and effective struggles to further the Republican cause. The Federalists by their deceitful approbation will injure you more than the *soi-disant* Northern Democrats by their open hostility. It is a desperate remedy, and perhaps illy-advised, but I think, if it is compatible with the injunction of secrecy, you ought to come forward and disclose the circumstances which induced you to separate in some measure from the administrators of the government. The people want your motives."<sup>3</sup>

Equally sensible was Bryan's advice about Jefferson: "I feel rejoiced that you are about to do yourself justice on Madison and his Myrmidons. If I may advise, leave the President alone, unless self-defence makes it necessary to use his name."<sup>4</sup>

Cautious as Bryan's advice usually was to Randolph in political respects, he entered zealously into the bold

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 211.

<sup>2</sup> April, 23, 1806, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> June 3, 1806, *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> June 24, 1806, *Id.*



intrigue by which Randolph sought to bowl Madison off the Presidential alley with Monroe. Referring to Gideon Granger, Bryan said in another letter:

"There is no charm in the name of Gideon. God will not couple his name or his arm with such a miscreant, and his squadron will be discomfited. Let not him be your aim. Shoot at nobler game; strike at the root and the branches and leaves will come to the ground. In short, the future President must be of the old school, and you must have a hand in making him President."<sup>1</sup>

He did all that he could to secure popular support for Monroe in Georgia, and he kept Randolph fully apprized of every movement of the political tides there. After Randolph's speech on Gregg's resolution, he wrote derisively of Milledge, a Georgia politician:

"Milledge is in great wrath with you for saying 'You would rather be tried by a British jury than Bonaparte with a file of grenadiers in the wood of 'Valenceniennies'—(Spelt as pronounced)." "*His own words verbatim*, repeated to about a dozen crackers in my presence," Bryan adds disdainfully.<sup>2</sup>

He was quick to tell Randolph that the Georgia Legislature had named one of its new counties after him; a county which bid fair to become one of the most important in the State.<sup>3</sup> In another letter, he tells Randolph that he may do what he pleases with Troup and Smelt, two active Georgia politicians, "by condescension or brandy," although he believed that neither was deficient in understanding or honesty, and that both Harris and Spalding, two other active Georgia politicians, adored him.<sup>4</sup>

Encouraged by Randolph's reviving influence during the

<sup>1</sup> Apr. 23, 1806, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Sept. 12, 1806, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 2, 1807, *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Nov. 7, 1808, *Id.*

second session of the Ninth Congress, Bryan wrote: "I find that you are getting ahead again; *an easy matter to you*, no flattery."<sup>1</sup> In one of his letters, he also mentioned the fact that Eppes had written to him in "becoming, nay, high terms" of Randolph; though at the same time expressing his regret that Randolph's manners to him should be repulsive; and Bryan added that he wished that Randolph could be reconciled to him.<sup>2</sup>

The political features of these letters, however, are by no means the most interesting. One of them deals with the point of honor involved in the duel as if it were a sort of colic to be relieved only by a little blood-letting. Speaking of a wrathful conversation that he had had with an individual named Wright about the Yazoo Fraud, Bryan said:

"I threw a tumbler at him, which hit him on the head. He returned, and, while my friends very kindly pinioned me, struck me twice in the face. You will oblige me by settling matters with him, or his friend, as soon as may be, in such a way as you know calculated to give me ease."<sup>3</sup>

Bryan was not slow, however, to make amends for one of his rash outbreaks. He was no mere *rixator de lana caprina*. Among the Bryan manuscripts is a letter to some one in which he refers to a fracas into which he had been drawn at Louisville, Georgia, in these contrite terms: "You may suppose, Sir, that I am pleased with the issue of this affair. I solemnly assure you I am not. I am ashamed of the beginning, ashamed of the consequences and ashamed of the end."<sup>4</sup> Pleasingly contrasted with this violent explosion of ill-regulated temper, are the revelations of Bryan's devoted affection for Randolph,

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 24, 1807, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Mar. 8, 1807, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Jan. 27, 1806, *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Dec. 10, 1802, *Id.*

and his own family, and for plantation life in Georgia, which we find in his letters to Randolph. "Adieu, dear misanthrope, I am going to Delia," are the concluding words of one of them.<sup>1</sup> "God bless you, you have many friends here, none of which love you more than Joseph Bryan," are those of another.<sup>2</sup>

One of the desires of Bryan's heart was that Randolph should pay him another visit:

"You are much beloved in this State," he wrote, "and I wish you could come among us. Remember your promise to visit me in May. You must lay your hands on my son and *yours* before I die. Call him what you please, so you bless him. My little Georgia thrives apace. I have inherited about 40 negroes since November, and, if you will come out and say the word, 'I want them,' they are yours. God bless you. Randolph can say godfather."<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, Bryan rarely wrote a letter to Randolph in which he did not have something to say about Randolph's godson. A request from Randolph that he might be the godfather of the child provoked these characteristic comments:

"If you are godfather to anything of the name of Bryan, I fear you will have more sin to answer for than was packed on the back of Christian in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. I take the request to be a further proof of your friendship, and, if the poor soul is to enter at all into the pale of Grace, I will attend to it."<sup>4</sup>

A few weeks later, he wrote to Randolph:

"My boy, as he increases in age, increases in beauty. He has fine blue eyes, fair complexion and hair darker than yours.

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 21, 1806, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> June 3, 1806, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Jan. 31, 1808, *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> March 18, 1806, *Id.*

His mother thinks him a finished performance. As to me, I say no more than what is above written. I wish he may possess the talent and virtues of his future godfather."<sup>1</sup>

Another letter pronounces the child truly a cherub.<sup>2</sup> In still another, Bryan writes: "Citizen Randolph is making a terrible racket in the room, dressed in a scarlet frock and check apron."<sup>3</sup> And in yet another, he fears that Randolph's godson would need a dozen godfathers to keep him from sinning; for a more mischievous child, he said, never was born, nor one more obstinate.<sup>4</sup> Later on, he wrote to Randolph that his protégé was as saucy as need be, spelt in two syllables and was as active as a cat, but that the writer's son, Tom, was worth two of him.<sup>5</sup> This letter was written some months after a preceding one in which Randolph had been informed that his godson had as much spirit in embryo as his godfather, and that, a few minutes before, he had thrown a large piece of lightwood at his father, believing that the latter was hurting his mother.<sup>6</sup>

Many are the playful references in Bryan's letters to the help that Randolph had given him in his courtship of Delia. After telling him in one letter that, if he would pay him a visit, he would find lamb, veal, fish, terrapin, and laughter in abundance, would literally kill poor Spalding with joy, and make the midriffs of Houston and Bailey, as well as those of his other friends, quiver with ecstasy, Bryan said:

"It is worth the ride to see Randolph, who, taken altogether, is nearly as much your son as mine. You courted for me, recommended me to the papa, and he bears your name, to say

<sup>1</sup> Apr. 23, 1806, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Oct. 19, 1806, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 28, 1806, *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> July 16, 1809, *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> May 27, 1810, *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> Jan. 4, 1810, *Id.*

nothing of the holy rite which is to place his hopes of eternal salvation on the moral lessons you will give him."<sup>1</sup>

In the succeeding year, he refers to Delia again:

"You send your love to Delia by every letter, and, faith, I begin to think she loves you more than she ought to do, considering some things before marriage. She says that, if you are worth 2 pence, you ought to come. I move to amend by striking out *two pence* and inserting one hundred dollars."<sup>2</sup>

At home, all the interests, joys, and sorrows of Bryan were those of a typical Southern planter. His place of residence was, of course, very malarious, and Randolph observed on one occasion that, in his references to the health of his family and himself, he always spoke of "the fever" as if he had taken out a patent on it.<sup>3</sup> In one letter to Randolph, he says that he has nearly 100 bags of cotton on hand, commonly worth \$10,000, after having disposed of one-third of his crop to advantage; but that, owing to the embargo, this residue was worth little more than nothing.<sup>4</sup> In another letter, he says: "I am a planter and nothing else. All my faculties are employed by grass, bugs, rains, dry weather, etc."<sup>5</sup> At times, he was in debt, as most Southern planters, no matter how much their lands and negroes might increase, were likely to be. In 1812, he wrote to Randolph that he believed that he might with safety assert that he was "worth nearly twice as much property" at that time as he had possessed when he married<sup>6</sup>; but, struggle as he might, he found himself face to face occasionally with the necessity

<sup>1</sup> Nov. 28, 1806, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> March 8, 1807, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Nicholson, Bizarre, Sept. 27, 1806, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>4</sup> Feb. 23, 1808, Bryan MSS.

<sup>5</sup> May 27, 1807, *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> March 1, 1812, *Id.*

of selling some of his land and negroes. In one of his letters, he wrote:

“However, I am in truth a very rich man, could I bear the idea of selling land and negroes. This I shall do, however my feelings may be injured, next winter, if something out of the common course does not happen. Were cotton to rise to the usual price, and no curse of the elements or caterpillars molest me, I could be all right.”<sup>1</sup>

On another occasion, he sums up pithily in his own case the lot of most Southern planters, even the richest: “I have little money, but plenty of everything else.”<sup>2</sup>

The whinny of the horse, it is hardly necessary to say, runs through Bryan's letters. In one of them, he tells Randolph that he is about to purchase an imported stallion, “a grandson of Rockingham” and that he had purchased a mare impregnated by Bedford.<sup>3</sup> In another letter, he notes that Randolph still has “a little love for the smack of the whip,” and then follow some observations on Hyperion, his “poor friend Roanoke,” “old Jacobin,” and Randolph's colt out of his imported mare by Dragon, which were doubtless very interesting to Randolph at the time, but have become a little *passé* with the lapse of 114 years.<sup>4</sup>

After reading the following letter from Randolph to Bryan, our regret that almost all of his letters to Bryan should have been destroyed receives a new edge:

“If you had been ‘like other men,’ our friendship, perhaps, had never existed; or, what is more probable, it would have terminated long ago. It was because I thought you ‘made of different materials’ from the rest of the world that I first attached myself so strongly to you. Your mention, however,

<sup>1</sup> July 14, 1811, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> March 8, 1807, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Oct., 1807, *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Oct. 19, 1806, *Id.*

of the *price* of the *chair* smells strongly of the pomps and vanities of this wicked life, which you, or your godfathers for you, have long since solemnly renounced. It is as if you were not only as other men, but our connection a mere dirty traffic of interest, or convenience, instead of being what it really is, the offspring of pure and disinterested attachment. I did not oppose your purchasing Meade's carriage, in order to *sell* you *mine*, but from considerations of the inconvenience he might feel. I hope, therefore, to hear no more about the *price* of my chair. On a fair settlement of our accounts, were such a thing practicable, I believe I should fall more than its value in your debt. I returned home yesterday after a week's absence. I was summoned on the federal grand jury, which gave me an opportunity of being acquainted with the mysteries of the celebrated Logwood [the forger] a gentleman of great ingenuity and address, who has kindly undertaken to supply the deficiency of our circulating medium.

"I took Petersburg in my way home, where I saw Meade, who is at length settled there. He is in bad health, threatened with a return of his old complaint in the breast, and worse spirits. He spoke of you with the warmest affection. Ryland Randolph, too, has returned, much benefited by his trip to New York. For Heaven's sake, make haste and put old Archer's advice into execution, that you may return once more among Us. I have not shewn you half my friends, and the few neighbors I have were buried in professional business when you were here. *Apropos* of returning. A letter from Forman, dated Rose Hill, 25 April, 1804, Extract: 'Delia returned home last week from Chestertown; she is quite well and in good spirits.' If the fascinating spell of her name does not bring you northward, I shall begin to think you a faint-hearted fellow, who will never win a fair lady, unless the proverbial wisdom of our nurses and grandmothers should prove sheer nonsense, which I am by no means inclined to believe, at least in relation to female concerns. Besides, you seem to have entered into the spirit of racing, and will be able to hold as learned a discourse on blood, bone, speed and bottom, as the major, or myself, before the winter. Therefore, dispatch your worldly concerns, and attend to the spiritual.

Congress meets on the first of November, and, in despite of 'bad accommodations, worse roads, extravagant bills,' yea and even of '*drunken society*,' you *must* take this house in your way to Washington. If this was a case that admitted of argument, I would ask whether, if Congress sat on Cape Florida (as I wish they did), you would suffer me to go by water to Augustine and pass you by as if I were a Pharisee or a Levite (which I am not) and you a publican and sinner (which you are). Yes, a publican who entertains all comers gratis. I therefore signify to you my pleasure that you appear here accordingly. By the way, how you found the road expensive, where I have never been able to get rid of more than three dollars in twenty-four hours, I know not, or rather I do know. I have very little propensity to a rigid economy myself, but I never paid more than 15 or 20 cents for crossing Staunton River, where you generously gave six dollars. I have no doubt that expresses were instantly dispatched to let all persons concerned know that a rich Georgian Nabob, with pockets more distended than his cotton bags, was on the road. You say yourself that you are a little purse-proud, and those, who are so but *a little*, pay for it a *great deal*. Now as 20 : 600 :: your expenses : to mine, and, as I disbursed about three dollars a day, you must have expended ninety. So says the rule of three. You had need to travel at a pretty rapid rate under such circumstances."<sup>1</sup>

Other intimate friends of Randolph in the earlier stages of his career were Joseph H. Nicholson; Joseph C. Clay; James W. Garnett; and Nathaniel Macon (*a*), all of whom served in the lower House with him. It was doubtless through Nicholson that Randolph first became acquainted with Delia and her father, General Forman. "Bryan was so kind as to give me his company for some time on his way to Georgia," Randolph wrote to Nicholson, before Delia became Bryan's wife. "And a most pleasant time it was. Do you see his Dulcinea frequently? She is a charming woman, and deserves such a worthy fellow

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, 30 May (1804), Bryan MSS.



as my friend, which is what I would not venture to say to all the ladies whom I have seen."<sup>1</sup> Subsequent to Delia's marriage, he wrote to the same friend:

"I have late letters from Rodney and Bryan. They are both well, and the last is happy with his little piquant wife as heart could desire. She is, indeed, a charming woman and, for her sake, I regret extremely the breach with her father. Pray let me know if there is any prospect that my friend, the Major, will at last acquit himself with credit in this business."<sup>2</sup>

Just what the cause of this breach was is not entirely clear. Perhaps, it was because General Forman was averse to having his daughter live at such a great distance from him. At any rate, we know that he offered to give Bryan a life estate in his country-seat on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, called "Rose Hill," if he would become a resident of Maryland. Perhaps, it was because the General tied his purse strings into too hard a knot.

"Speaking of the papa," Bryan declared in one of his letters to Randolph, when he anticipated a visit from his father-in-law, "I request that, in case he passes through Washington, and sees you, you will treat him in a friendly way—if the contrary, he will be apt to suppose your conduct the consequence of impressions stamped by myself. He is coming too fast. He is a queer mortal; but after all I am at a loss to know whether he is resolved to do right or wrong. I suspect the former. As to the property, old men seldom like to part with any; besides it may not suit him at this time."<sup>3</sup>

Whatever the origin of the breach was, Randolph soon noted that General Forman kept aloof from him, and the relations between the General and Bryan were never cordial. But, like a good daughter, Delia made a per-

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, July 1, 1804, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Bizarre, July 28, 1805, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Nov. 28, 1806, Bryan MSS.

sistent point of being reconciled to her father, and formed a cordial regard for his second wife, who may, after all, have supplied the ferment that stirred up the whole trouble.

Many of the observations made by Randolph in his letters to Nicholson on the course of political events have already been laid before the reader. Others are worthy of mention, especially those in which Randolph communicated to Nicholson the feelings with which he had been inspired by the efforts of Samuel Smith and his brother, Robert Smith, of Maryland, "the Lords Baltimore" of Maryland politics, as they were called, and their fellow conspirators, to drive Albert Gallatin out of the office of Secretary of the Treasury. During the administration of Madison, the group became known to Randolph, Macon, and their friends as "the invisibles," because of the secret manner in which their machinations were conducted. Speaking of the Smiths in one of his letters to Nicholson, Randolph said:

"The doughty General is vulnerable at all points, (*a*) and his plausible brother not much better defended. The first has condemned in terms of unqualified reprobation the general measures pursued by the administration, and lamented that such was the public infatuation that no man could take a position against it without destroying himself and injuring the cause which he attempted to serve; with much more to the same tune. I called some time since at the Navy Office to ask an explanation of certain items of the estimates for this year. The Secretary called up his Chief Clerk, who knew very little more of the business than his master. I propounded a question to the Head of the Department; he turned to the clerk, like a boy who cannot say his lesson, and with imploring countenance beseeches aid. The clerk, with much assurance, gabbled out some commonplace jargon, which I would not take for sterling. An explanation was required, and both were dumb. This pantomime was re-

peated at every new item, until, disgusted and ashamed of the degraded situation of the principal, I took leave without pursuing the subject, seeing that my object could not be attained. There was not one single question relating to the Department that the Secretary could answer."<sup>1</sup>

For a time, all intercourse between Gallatin and Randolph ended, though Randolph never ceased to entertain a high degree of admiration for Gallatin's ability and usefulness. (*a*)

"Like yourself," he wrote to Nicholson, "I have no communication with the great folks. Gallatin used formerly to write to me, but of late our intercourse has dropped. I think it is more than two years since I was in his house. How this has happened I can't tell, or rather I *can*, for I have not been invited there. As to the rest, they were not worth cultivating."

It was in this letter that in his witty way, after expressing the opinion that the Jefferson Administration would be as supine under the Chesapeake outrage as it had been under previous outrages, Randolph said:

"I should not be surprised, however, if the Drone or Humble Bee (the Wasp has sailed already) should be dispatched with two millions (this is our standing first bid) to purchase Nova Scotia; and then we might go to war in peace and quiet to ascertain its boundaries."<sup>2</sup>

Afterwards, the Smith faction, reinforced by Wm. B. Giles, harassed Gallatin and the administration of Madison so successfully that Randolph declared in a letter to Nicholson that Madison was President *de jure* only.

"Who exercises the office *de facto*," he said, "I know not; but it seems agreed on all hands that 'there is something be-

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 17, 1807, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Bizarre, Jul. 21, 1807, *Id.*

hind the throne greater than the throne itself.' I cannot help differing with you respecting ————'s [Gallatin's] resignation. If his principal will not support him by his influence against the cabal *in the ministry itself*, as well as out of it, a sense of self-respect, it would seem to me, ought to impel him to retire from a situation where, with a tremendous responsibility, he is utterly destitute of power. Our cabinet presents a novel spectacle in the political world, divided against itself, and the most deadly animosity raging between its principal members. What can come of it but confusion, mischief and ruin."<sup>1</sup>

Three days later, Randolph was reduced to such a state of despair that the whole world seemed black:

"I am not convinced by your representations respecting ———, altho they are not without weight. Surely it would not be difficult to point out to the President the impossibility of conducting the affairs of the Government with such a counteraction in the very Cabinet itself without assuming anything like a disposition to dictate. Things as they are cannot go on much longer. The Administration are now in fact aground—at the pitch of a tide, and a high tide too: nothing then remains but to lighten the ship, which a dead calm has hitherto kept from going to pieces. If the Cabal succeed in their present projects; and I see nothing but promptitude and decision that can prevent it; the nation is undone. The state of affairs for some time past has been highly favorable to their views, which at this very moment are more flattering than ever. I am satisfied that Mr. G, [Gallatin], by a timely resistance to their schemes, might have defeated them, and rendered the whole Cabal as impotent as nature would seem to have intended them to be, for in point of ability (capacity for intrigue excepted) they are utterly contemptible and insignificant. I do assure you, my friend, that I cannot contemplate the present condition of the country without the gloomiest presages. The signs of the times are of the most direful omen. The system cannot

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 14, 1811, *Id.*

continue (if system it may be called), and we seem rushing into one general dissolution of law and morals. Some Didius, I fear, is soon to become the purchaser of our Empire—but, in whatever manner it be effected, everything appears to announce the coming of a *master*. Thank God! I have no children; but I have those who are yet dear to me and the thought of their being hewers of wood and drawers of water—or what is worse, sycophants and time-servers, to the venal and corrupt wretches, that are to be the future masters of this once free and happy land, fills me with the *bitterest indignation*. Would it not almost seem that man cannot be kept free: that his ignorance, his cupidity, and his baseness will countervail the effects of the wisest institutions that disinterested patriotism can plan for his security and happiness?"<sup>1</sup>

The struggle between Gallatin and the Smith and Giles cabal finally came to absorb the attention of Randolph to an extent that he himself could hardly understand.

"I could not learn, as I passed through Washington," he wrote to Nicholson later, "how matters stood respecting G. and S. The general impression there was that S. would go out and that the Department of State would be offered to Monroe. I *do*, however, doubt whether Madison will be able to meet the shock of '*The Aurora*,' '*Whig*,' '*Enquirer*,' '*Boston Patriot*,' etc., etc., and it is highly probable that, beaten in detail by the superior activity and vigor of the S——s, he may sink ultimately into their arms, and unquestionably will (in that case) receive the law from them. I know not why I should think so much on this subject, but it engrosses my waking and sleeping thoughts."<sup>2</sup>

As usual, Randolph was in the possession of authentic information. He was always a capital scout, and on one occasion declared that he had paid more for information than any public man of his time.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown. Feb. 17, 1811, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Richmond, Mar. 16, 1811, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, Dec. 26, 1827, Garl., v. 2, 297.

Some of the weightiest comments made by him on contemporary politics were made in letters to Nicholson. Take, for example, the following letter in regard to the foreign relations of the United States in 1808:

“Suspend your opinion until you see the joint letter of M. and [the] P. accompanying the rejected treaty. For some good reason, no doubt, the S. of S’s strictures on the treaty were first read (even before the treaty itself), to secure, I presume, the first impression. Your surprise, I have no doubt, will equal mine when you hear that the P. peremptorily enjoined upon M. to connect with the demand for reparation of the outrage on the Chesapeake *claims which he had a previous knowledge* would not be conceded by G. B. even under the late ministry, thus shutting with his own hand the door of reparation to that insulting injury. As to G. B., I view her as the aggressor upon us, and as acting a part little short of madness, and yet I am convinced that the present crisis grows out of the proceedings of the session of 1805-6, and that our government does *not* wish to come to any accommodation with England for fear of the resentment of France. The rejection of the treaty was a fatal step, and exasperated the new ministry as a slight upon the nation, altho’ I believe they were otherwise glad of it.

“With you, I am clearly of the opinion that G. B. has not a shadow of right to require the withdrawal of the Proclamation (neither had France, in 1798 any right to expect a renewal of negotiations by a new mission from the U. S.), but, when we had gone as far as we had done, it was hardly worth while to go to war for the decimal fraction of a punctilio. The issuing of the Proclamation without any attempt to enforce respect to it was a weak measure. The withdrawal was of less consequence, inasmuch as it might have been laid on again in half an hour, in case the reparation proved insufficient. Besides, the declaration of G. B. that she disavowed the act, as unauthorized by her, and that she was ready (by a special mission, suited to the solemnity of the occasion) to make reparation, was a complete saving of our honor.

“I forgot to state that the *note* which proved so offensive to

our government appears to me (taking into consideration especially, the persons for whom it came) as a proof of Candor and Good Faith; thereby putting us on our guard; for surely, if no such caution had been given, the right to retaliate upon the French would not have been affected.

"I send you an extract which will shew you how the business of impressment stood. Our right was reserved. G. B. engaged to forbear the exercise of that claimed by her, and stipulated that hereafter she would enter into a negotiation on the reserved right. Since writing the above, I have read Mr. Monroe's letter to the S. of S. upon the subject of the rejected treaty in which all his objections are refuted in a most masterly style. If there is time for its operation, it will work prodigious effects."<sup>1</sup>

Not without interest too is this letter:

"As to politics, I have nothing to say. Like the sailor who was blown up at a theatre, I am wondering what trick they will play next. If some change be not wrought very soon, I shall be blown up in good earnest. Peter the Great, it seems, was a bungling barbarian. Instead of contenting himself with the navigation of his own Mississippi, the Volga, and establishing manufactories at Moscow, he plunged into a bloody war in order to procure an outlet thro' the Baltic for the rude and bulky products of his country and an outlet for foreign manufacturers. In those days, the virtue of perpetual embargoes was unknown. It would be pleasant, if it were not sorrowful, to observe in what opposite direction the poor, plodding farmers of England and America are driven by the monied interest to attain the same end. England bleeds at every pore to force a vent for her manufactures, and we are cooped up to force a home consumption. Who is it that says that corruption is a proof of freedom, since arbitrary power has but to order and is obeyed? Pity that corruption should be too often the only proof of freedom."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Washington, March 8, 1808, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Bizarre, Aug. 15, 1809.

"War carried on by Giles and old Smilie and Willis Alston!" Randolph exclaimed scornfully on another occasion. "It must be against the pismires, for the pigmies and cranes, or the frogs and mice, would be too formidable antagonists."<sup>1</sup>

Nicholson died on Mar. 4. 1817, at the age of forty-nine, (a) and, at least, until Mar. 20 1812,<sup>2</sup> the intercourse between him and Randolph was of the most affectionate description. This was not because Randolph was not as candid with him as he was with everyone else. On one occasion he wrote to Nicholson in these frank terms:

"I should be deficient in my duties to you were I to neglect to apprise you that your absence has excited observation and even censure. It has been remarked, I know not how truly, that you have not obtained from the House a dispensation from its duties. I hope you know me too well not to perceive at once the only motive which prompts this communication, and, although I fear that I am but little calculated to live forever in the palace of truth, I sincerely wish that, if the monster, called the world, shall ever take the trouble to scrutinize my conduct, you will be good enough, when occasion offers, to apprise me of such parts of it as his sovereign pleasure may disapprove."<sup>3</sup>

As usual, when Randolph loved a friend, he loved Nicholson's wife and children too, and many are the affectionate messages to her and them that we find scattered through his letters to her husband.<sup>4</sup> "Give my love, yes, *my love*, to her and them," was one of these messages.<sup>5</sup> On another occasion, he referred to Mrs. Nicholson as Nicholson's "charming moiety."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, Feb. 15, 1810, *Id.*

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Jan. 1, 1801, *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Bizarre, June 3, 1806, *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Richm., Oct. 12, 1805, *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> Letter to Nicholson, Bizarre, Oct, 23, 1805, Beverley D. Tucker MSS.



Among the letters from Randolph to Nicholson, are two mysterious ones, written some three years apart, and yet both apparently inspired by the same circumstances. In the first, he wrote to Nicholson in these terms:

“By *you*, I would be understood. Whether the herd of mankind comprehend me or not I care not. Yourself, the speaker and Bryan are of all the world alone acquainted with my *real* situation.

“On that subject I have only to ask that you will preserve the same reserve that I have done. Do not misunderstand me, my good friend. I do not doubt your honor or discretion—far from it. But, on this subject, I am perhaps foolishly fastidious.

“God bless you, my noble fellow. I shall ever hold you most dear to my heart.”<sup>1</sup>

In the second of the two letters, Randolph said:

“Do you remember the event which some years ago prostrated all my faculties and made a mere child of me. I am that very same child still. I have tried wine, company, business, everything within my reach to divert my mind from the subject, but *haeret lethalis arundo*.”<sup>2</sup>

To what event in the life of Randolph do these two letters refer? Doubtless to the rupture of his engagement to Maria Ward.

It seems that Mrs. Nicholson, as well as her husband, was interested in finding a wife for Randolph; but this was early in his Congressional career.

“I beg that you will make my compliments to Mrs. Nicholson,” he wrote to Nicholson on one occasion, “and tell her that the happiness which she has allotted to me is too great I fear to be realized. It is not my good fortune to obtain that

<sup>1</sup> Monday, Mar. 4, 1805, Nicholson MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Bizarre, May 27, 1808, *Id.*

title to her esteem which the possession of an amiable woman can never fail to confer.”<sup>1</sup>

In the same letter, there is a touch of the conservative sentiment which was such a marked feature of Randolph’s character:

“I am sorry,” he said, “that you have demolished the old house, because I fear that you are about to enter upon a scene of greater trouble than you are aware of; and, moreover because I have a respect for all that is antique (with a few important exceptions). I would prefer dwelling in the mansion where I had passed my infancy, even were it ruinous, to the possession of a palace.”<sup>2</sup>

When Nicholson sent in his resignation to Congress, Randolph was affected even to tears.<sup>3</sup>

With the differences of opinion, aroused by the War of 1812, the correspondence between the two friends came to an end (*a*), and a premonition of this result can be found in the following letter written by Randolph from Georgetown on Dec. 20, 1811:

“I was highly gratified this evening to recognize among my letters your well known character—but really, my good friend—for I must indulge the frankness of my temper—I was not merely disappointed but mortified when I had broken the seal: mortified to find from the general air of your letter that you had been hurt at my last. Need I assure you that nothing was ever farther from my intention. Bear with me, I beseech you. Recollect that I stand in no common situation, and that he, who is beset with assassins of his character, and of his life too, must feel that it is no time for *him* to press himself upon his *friends*. It is in the sunshine of prosperity that I could intrude, nay *force* myself upon them. My dear friend, I never did nor ever will keep a ledgered account of courtesies

<sup>1</sup> Aug. 12, 1800, Nicholson MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> H. of R. alias Bedlam, Apr. 10, 1806.

and visits and epistles with any man whom I esteem. But I did think that there was something in my letters from Roanoke that called for a reply—and, when I got your message from D. R. Williams, I told him to say to you (what I understood he had expressed) that you were two letters in my debt. Your letter has sunk the barometer of my spirits to a low ebb. It has not been very high of late. 'Time and chance, which happen unto all men,' have not left me out of their visitations. *Unconnected, unconsulted and betrayed*, I still wage a feeble war against that horde of upstart patriots who are ruining our common country: but it requires an unceasing recurrence to the principles and motives, by which I am actuated, to sustain me in the unequal conflict; a conflict where more is to be apprehended from the barrenness of the country, from thirst and famine, than from the shafts of the Enemy."<sup>1</sup>

Exactly how the estrangement of Nicholson from Randolph came about we are unable to say. We only know that the War of 1812 produced a passing coolness in the relations of Randolph and Macon as well as those of Randolph and Nicholson. "I cannot account for the coldness with which you say he treated you, or his not staying at your house while in Baltimore," Macon wrote to Nicholson of Randolph in 1815.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand we find Randolph complaining in a letter to Dr. Dudley that Nicholson had not called upon him when he passed through Baltimore.<sup>3</sup> (a) There is every reason to believe that no real termination of the friendship was ever effected and that, if the life of Nicholson had not been cut off when it was, the intercourse between him and Randolph would have been as completely renewed as that between Macon and Randolph was. We need no better confirmation of this assertion than a letter which Randolph wrote to his niece after the death of Nicholson:

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Dec. 20, 1811, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Feb. 1, 1815, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>3</sup> Baltimore, Oct. 13, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 162.

"Mrs. Nicholson (the widow of Joseph H. N., late of our House) was here on a short visit to her sister," he said, "and Mr. Frank Key pressed me to dine with her in Georgetown at his house—the farthest off of any in the place. It was one of those cases where it was impossible to decline the invitation. The consequences were in such weather unavoidable. I had known Mr. and Mrs. N. intimately many years ago. She was then young and affluent. At present, her circumstances are narrow, but she bears all her bereavement with a noble fortitude. She was very much affected at meeting me, and so was I also."<sup>1</sup> (a)

So far as we know, no letters from Randolph to Joseph Clay are in existence; but there can be no doubt that his relations with Clay were as affectionate as his relations with Nicholson. When he heard that Clay had been stricken with the illness which resulted in his death, he wrote to Dr. Dudley, who was then in Philadelphia: "I shall be on thorns until the arrival of the next mail";<sup>2</sup> and, a few days later, he wrote to Dr. Dudley: "I leave you to judge of the state of my feelings when I tell you that I rode 30 miles through the rain yesterday for the sake of hearing of Mr. Clay's situation, and found no letter from you."<sup>3</sup> A few days more, and the afflicting intelligence reached Randolph, through Dr. Brockenbrough, that Clay was dead.

"It" (Dr. Brockenbrough's letter), he told Dudley, "dropped from my hands as if I had touched a living firebrand. I cannot tell you what I feel. I could not, if I knew myself; but I do not. I am stupefied; I do not know what I am about. I will try and write again tomorrow. Say to Mrs. Clay what I could not say if I were with her; I could only wring her hand and mingle my tears with hers."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Feb. 14, 1823, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Bruce's, Halifax, Aug. 25, 1811, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 98.

<sup>3</sup> Charlotte C. H., Sept. 2, 1811, *Id.*, 99.

<sup>4</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 8, 1811, *Id.*, 102.

In the Diary, the name of Clay is associated with these words: "Died Monday, July 26, 1811, '*Quis desiderio sit modus tam cari capitis!*'"

But with no friend was Randolph on easier or more familiar terms than with James M. Garnett, of Essex County, Va., who was a member of the House of Representatives from 1805 to 1809, and one of his inflexible adherents. "Mine ancient," Randolph fondly called him in a letter to Tazewell.<sup>1</sup> Indeed so heartfelt and informal was the intercourse between Randolph and Garnett that it is for that very reason perhaps that the numerous letters from the former to the latter, which are still in existence, are not more important than they are. In other words, Randolph brought to his letters to Garnett a spontaneous, careless flow of feeling which, while very attractive so far as it goes, does not cover any considerable variety of topics. (a) Nothing, however, could be more affectionate than the terms in which the two friends address each other during the long period of their intimacy.

"Our friendship," Randolph wrote on one occasion, "commenced soon after he took his seat in Congress, and has continued uninterrupted by a single moment of coolness or alienation during three and twenty years, and very trying times, political and otherwise. I take a pride in naming this gentleman among my steady, uniform and unwavering friends. In Congress he never said an unwise thing or gave a bad vote."<sup>2</sup>

"One whom I love," is the way in which Randolph described Garnett in a letter to Garnett himself.<sup>3</sup>

More like the love of a woman for a man or a woman, than of a man for a man was that which Randolph and Nathaniel Macon bore for each other. It began during the Sixth Congress, and never ended so long as they lived.

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 8, 1826, Littleton Waller Tazewell, Jr., MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 289 (note).

<sup>3</sup> Mar. 30, 1812, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.

Indeed, as Randolph's ancestors believed that the warrior still retained his favorite bow in the happy hunting grounds beyond the grave, so it costs us almost a struggle to realize that the life-long communion of spirit and conviction which marked the lives of these two men could be dissolved even by death: "Jonathan did not love David more than I have Randolph," Macon wrote to Nicholson during the brief period when he thought it possible that he might lose his friend and, when we remember that envy and jealousy are among the most general of all human passions, we cannot but find something uncommonly sweet and winning in the unfailing sympathy and admiration with which Macon drank in all of Randolph's great oratorical displays. One of Randolph's speeches on the Yazoo question he pronounced the most eloquent speech ever made within the walls of the House.<sup>1</sup> In their early lives, they were both devotees of the Arcadian Republicanism which the first election of Jefferson to the Presidency was expected to establish. Later, after the political divergences, created by the War of 1812, had come to an end, they were again brought into harmonious fellowship by the State-Rights cause. The understanding between them became as perfect as it had ever been, and finally, when from advancing years and physical infirmity they were compelled to hug their fireside at Washington more closely than they had done in the past, they grew almost like a husband and wife, who have shared the same thoughts and feelings so long that, from the ties of habit, if nothing else, they are indispensable to each other. "I can't read," Randolph wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough in 1827, "and my old friend's cough is excited by talking; so we sit and look at the fire together, and once in half an hour some remark is made by one or the other."<sup>2</sup> About a year later, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough: "I go no-

<sup>1</sup> *A. of C.*, 1809-10, v. 1, 735.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 12, 1827, *Garland*, v. 2, 282.

where, and see nobody but Mr. Macon. He is so deaf that he picks up none of the floating small trash in the Senate, and I am hard put to it to make him hear my hoarse whispers."<sup>1</sup> It was during the same year that Randolph wrote to his niece of Macon: "He is as pure and upright a man as lives and the wisest, take him for all in all, that I ever knew. During a friendship of 30 years, he has steadily gained upon my regard."<sup>2</sup> (a)

In his will, executed in 1832, Randolph was still sure enough of himself, after making various specific bequests to Macon, to declare that he was "the best, purest and wisest man" that he had ever known; and this declaration was but the last repetition of what he had over and over again said during the long years of their intercourse.<sup>3</sup> That "warm-hearted and sound-headed" man, is his description of Macon on one occasion.

"To him," Randolph said on another occasion, "may be applied with more justice than to any man that I have ever known, not excepting Mr. Wickham, the maxim, *nullum numen abest si sit Prudentia*. Johns Hopkins' assurance and Burr's audacity combined could not have prevailed upon Macon to invite the latter to dine with him, especially with the Chief Justice for a guest. The best part of it is (*ars est celare artem*) that he seems to be almost indiscreet. It is but a seeming that gives ten-fold power to the effect of his caution."<sup>4</sup>

Subsequently, after Randolph had left Congress forever, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough that he had just received two letters from Macon, "written evidently in fine spirits." "The good old man," he said, "is amusing himself with fox-hunting, but is by no means an inattentive or indifferent observer of public affairs."<sup>5</sup> (a)

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 26, 1827, *Id.*, 297.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Jan. 12, 1827, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Bouldin, 212.

<sup>4</sup> J. R. to Tazewell, Washington, Feb. 20, 1826, L. W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS.

<sup>5</sup> Washington, Jan. 28, 1829, Mrs. Gilbert S. Meem MSS.

In another letter, the fact is brought to our attention that Macon, when fox-hunting, experienced some annoyance from the fact that his hounds had a way of deserting the sport and running off after wild turkeys. Despite age and domestic troubles, of which he had his full share, he hunted both foxes and deer until the last.<sup>1</sup>

Of the domestic troubles, we have an inkling in a shrewd observation of his prompted by these troubles which Randolph was in the habit of quoting. Moved by the burdens which had been imposed upon him by grandchildren, who should have been taken care of by their own father, he called the attention of Randolph to the fact that men are the only grandfathers in the whole range of the animal creation who concern themselves about their grandchildren.

It is an appropriate thing that the names of these two friends should have been blended in the name of "Randolph-Macon College"; even though it has been hinted that the dual name of the institution owed its origin to a desire to propitiate the pecuniary favor of two of the most affluent planters in the Valley of the Roanoke.

A very good summary of the character of Macon is to be found in a letter written to Hugh Blair Grigsby by Mark Alexander, of Mecklenburg County, who served in Congress with both Randolph and him.

"Mr. Macon was a man of no literary attainments, being bred in the Revolution. He spoke but little in the latter part of his life, but always in plain language and to the purpose, with no pretension to eloquence; but no one ever left the Senate with a higher reputation for sound judgment and purity of character—a second George Mason. Mr. Randolph always spoke of him as the wisest man he ever knew."<sup>2</sup> (a)

<sup>1</sup> J. R. to J. R. Clay, Cronstadt, Sept. 7, 19, 1830, Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> To Hugh Blair Grigsby, July 2, 1876, Herbert F. Hutcheson MSS.



Next to the effort of the philosopher Locke to establish an order of Caciques in South Carolina, we know few things of the sort more amusing than the coat of arms which Randolph designed for Macon when he was in London in 1830, and his comments on it in a letter to Macon:

"What you say," he said, "about 'public debt and paper money and taxes to support their credit' is both pithy and *apropos*—for I have made a coat of arms for you. The *Field*, which is *Or*, is divided by a cross; *Argent* in each quarter is a tobacco plant; the Crest is a plant of Indian corn in full bearing—Motto 'suum cuique,' and over the crest—'Hard Money.' I had the tobacco topped to 8 leaves (4 plants to the lb.), but the painter and engraver made the stalk of corn so like a *Cat Tail* of our marshes, and the tobacco so like thistles that I cancelled the plate and ordered the tradesman to send me a drawing of each plant from a botanical work before he put the next in hand. At first, I intended that the Field should be *Gules* emblematical of your *red* hand, but the *gold* was preferred in reference to both the mottoes; for, without hard money, interlopers will feed out of our corn crib and chew our tobacco. I wish they would take only what they can chew. I say 'our,' as one of us the people."<sup>1</sup>

A close friend of both Randolph and Garnett was Richard Stanford, of North Carolina, who was a member of the House from 1797 to 1816. "Honest Dick," Randolph sometimes called him, and he was as sensible as he was honest, though apparently somewhat eccentric.

"Neither of us, I believe," Garnett wrote to Randolph immediately after Stanford's death, "ever had or shall have a more sincere friend, both personally and politically, and the public never lost a more faithful, conscientious and zealous servant. His understanding was very far above the estimate commonly made of it; and we might say of him with truth what I have scarcely ever known a man of whom the same

<sup>1</sup> London, Dec. 8, 1830, *So. Lit. Mess.*, Nov. 1856, pp. 382—385.

could be asserted—that no one ever continued so long in public life less contaminated by its numerous temptations and corruption. In losing him, I literally feel as if I had lost a part of myself.”<sup>1</sup>

During Stanford's last illness he was faithfully nursed by Randolph's servant Jupiter, until he succumbed to his exhausting vigils, and became ill himself. During the last night of his friend's existence, Randolph sat up with him until he died.<sup>2</sup> Two weeks after Stanford's death, saddened by it and the recent deaths or estrangement of other persons, who had been dear to him, Randolph wrote to Garnett in these terms: “Indeed, for the last fortnight (it is exactly that length of time since his melancholy and untimely end) I have been in a state of depression that disables me from thinking of anything except a sense of unhappiness which hangs heavy about my heart.”<sup>3</sup> Stanford was one of the friends who clung to Randolph through all his political vicissitudes, without the slightest mutation of loyalty. “In him,” Randolph wrote to Dr. George Logan, “I lost the best political friend that I had left on the floor of Congress.”<sup>4</sup> (a)

And Dr. George Logan himself, who served in the Senate from 1801 to 1807, was also one of Randolph's friends. He was a grandson of James Logan, the friend of William Penn and Benjamin Franklin, and resided at Stenton, the home of his ancestor near Philadelphia. When Randolph was in Philadelphia, in the winter of 1814-1815, he more than once enjoyed the hospitality of this historic home, and to its master and mistress he was truly attached. Once, when sending Ryland Randolph a letter of introduction to Dr. Logan, he said: “You will find him and his lady two of the most amiable and well

<sup>1</sup> Apr. 19, 1816, Theodore Garnett MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 85.

<sup>3</sup> Georgetown, April 23, 1816, Theodore Garnett MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Georgetown, Apr. 27, 1816.

informed people in the world. An excursion to Stenton will be an agreeable relaxation, as the spring advances."<sup>1</sup>

And now that we have been deflected from Washington to Stenton, we might add that Randolph had another warm friend in Pennsylvania in the person of David Parish, one of the wealthiest and most prominent citizens of Philadelphia. "He is a gentleman of great worth and intelligence," is the judgment that he passed upon him in one of his letters to Dr. Dudley.<sup>2</sup> Both when Randolph stopped over in Philadelphia on his way to Morrisania in 1814 and when he stopped over there on his return to Virginia, he was the recipient of much hospitable kindness at the hands of conspicuous Philadelphians; such as Parish, Dr. Nathaniel Chapman, a native of Virginia, and a Philadelphia physician of high repute; T. W. Francis, Dr. Logan and others. Parish had a home at Ogdensburg on the St. Lawrence as well as in Philadelphia, and, on one occasion, Randolph wrote to him playfully: "Save me an island in the St. Lawrence of about 300 acres. I mean actually to take a farm there and become one of your subjects."<sup>3</sup> In the same letter, he told Parish that he would like to know whether his neighbor, Charles Kahn, had received a few twists of chewing tobacco which he had sent him for a Mr. Yard, and that he hoped that Parish himself had received his "Virginian Champagne"—whatever that was; brandy or whiskey, we shrewdly suspect.

It was when Randolph was in Philadelphia in the winter of 1814-1815 that he had a sharp encounter with the Abbé Correa, the Portugese Minister to the United States, who had been so incautious at dinner as to use language which Randolph construed into a reflection upon Virginia. On this occasion Randolph is supposed to have been rather

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Mar. 17, 1816, *Maine Hist. Soc.*

<sup>2</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 118.

<sup>3</sup> Washington, Jan, 23, 1816, Beverley D. Tucker MSS.

worsted,<sup>1</sup> with the result that, afterwards, when he called at the house in Washington of Walsh, the newspaper editor, with whom Correa lived, his penetrating voice was heard in the parlor by Mrs. Walsh saying to the servant at the door, "Mind that card is for Mr. Walsh. I do not call on Ministers who board out."<sup>2</sup>

It was when Randolph was a guest of David Parish in 1815 that George Ticknor met him for the first time, and received the impressions, as much the result of previous prejudice as of actual knowledge, which have come down to us in these words:

"I dined today with Mr. Parish a banker and a man of fortune. He is a bachelor and lives in a style of great splendor. Everything at his table is of silver and this not for a single course or for a few persons, but through at least three courses for twenty. The meat and wines corresponded; the servants were in full livery with epaulets and the dining room was sumptuously furnished and hung with pictures of merit. But what was more to me than his table, or his fortune, John Randolph is his guest for some weeks. The instant I entered the room my eyes rested on his lean and sallow physiognomy. He was sitting and seemed hardly larger or taller than a boy of 15. He rose to receive me as I was presented and towered half a foot above my own height. This disproportion arises from the singular deformity of his person. His head is small and until you approach him near enough to observe the premature and unhealthy wrinkles that have furrowed his face, you would say that it was boyish, but as your eye turns towards his extremities everything seems to be unnaturally stretched and protracted. To his short and meagre body are attached long legs which instead of diminishing grow larger as they approach the floor until they end in a pair of feet broad and large, giving his whole person the appearance of a sort of pyramid. His arms are the counterfeit of his legs; they rise from small shoulders which seem hardly equal to the burden,

<sup>1</sup> *The Centenary of the Wistar Party*, by Hampton L. Carson, 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Life, etc., of Geo. Ticknor*, v. 1, 16.

are drawn out to a disproportionate length above the elbow and to a still greater length below; and at last are terminated by a hand heavy enough to have given the supernatural blow to William of Deloraine, and by fingers which might have served as a model for those of the Goblin page. In his physiognomy there is little to please or satisfy except an eye which glances on all and rests on none. You observe, however, a mixture of the white man and the Indian, marks of both being apparent. His long straight hair is parted on the top and a portion hangs down on each side, while the rest is carelessly tied up behind and flows down his back. His voice is shrill and effeminate and occasionally broken by low tones which you hear from dwarfs and deformed people. He spoke to me of the hospitality he had found in Philadelphia and of the prospect of returning to a comfortless home with a feeling that brought me nearer to him for the moment and of the illness of his nephew Tudor and the hopes that it had blasted with a tenderness and melancholy which made me think better of his heart than I had before. At table he talked little, but ate and smoked a great deal."<sup>1</sup>

Other Northern men, with whom Randolph was connected by a tie of genuine friendship were John Langdon, of New Hampshire, Josiah Quincy, and Rufus King.

Langdon was President of Marache's Club, where the members of Randolph's mess boarded, when Congress was still sitting in Philadelphia; and for him Randolph cherished a high degree of respect and affection.

"I subscribe to your opinion unequivocally of the Northeastern character," he once wrote to Nicholson. "John Langdon yet redeems that people in my eyes. There is at least one righteous man amongst them, and, did we draw our opinions from a knowledge of their yeomanry, instead of that wretched sample of priests and pettifoggers who have contrived to wriggle themselves to the surface, how different might be our estimate of their worth!"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life, Letters & Journals of Geo. Ticknor*, v. 1, 27.

<sup>2</sup> Bizarre, Nov. 8, 1805, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

Some 15 months or so later, he wrote to Nicholson:

"Since my last, I have had letters from Bryan and the old President of Marache's. They both speak of you as you could wish. Mr. Langdon writes: 'You say that our mutual friend, Judge Nicholson, is with you. Pray shake him by the hand for me. When I think of Marache's Club (which I often do), immediately are presented to my view a Macon, a Nicholson and other worthy members, now employed in our country's service, and in whose talents and integrity I have the fullest confidence. I should have the greatest happiness in taking you all by the hand.' God bless the old veteran! If ever nature formed an honest man, he is one."<sup>1</sup> (a)

Nothing but the old grating conflict of sectional aims and sympathies kept Randolph and Quincy from being the fastest of friends. The correspondence between them and the feelings, which were entertained about Randolph by Quincy's sons, Edmund and Josiah, make it clear that the two men had a natural affinity for each other. The manner, in which they became friends, has been narrated by Quincy in these words:

"I had no predilection for John Randolph, and liked not the idea of taking a man so fickle, wayward and overbearing as a sort of leader. However, I acceded to the policy of my friends during the first session, and was true to it. The first struggle was to get Macon of North Carolina, one of Randolph's friends, into the Speaker's Chair, which was effected with some difficulty, to his great joy and the annoyance of the friends of the Administration. Macon immediately appointed Randolph chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, for which place, had Jefferson's friends been successful, they had selected Barnabas Bidwell, of Massachusetts. I was placed upon the same committee, which gave me an opportunity of a personal acquaintance with Randolph, which resulted in as much intimacy as was practicable between me and a Southern man, haughty and wedded to Southern

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 15, 1807, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

supremacy, and who made no concealment of his want of general sympathy for Northern men and Northern interests. Towards me personally, his manners were polite in the extreme, and, during our whole political life, nothing ever occurred between us which was not of the most agreeable and friendly character. Our general views concerning Jefferson and his party were, for the most part, coincident, and in debate we seldom came in collision."<sup>1</sup>

Edmund Quincy tells us that it would be difficult to imagine two men more dissimilar in character and opinions than Randolph and Quincy were, and that yet the regard which they entertained for each other was a very real one.<sup>2</sup>

In the correspondence between them, it is clear enough that Randolph, though a slave-holder and an anti-Federalist, was disposed to bestow upon Quincy a measure of cordial friendship which the latter, with his sectional and partisan prejudices, was unable altogether to reciprocate. On one occasion, Mrs. Quincy asked her husband how it had happened that Randolph had referred, in a highly complimentary manner, to the speeches delivered by Harmanus Bleecker and James Emott, of New York, both Federalists, in a debate in the House, and yet had made no mention of his speech in the same debate. Quincy's reply betrays some little *amour propre*.

"As to his studied compliments to Bleecker and Emott, and his silence with regard to me, of which [Isaac P.] Davis spoke," he replied, "I never troubled myself to inquire the reason, or noticed the fact, as I never deemed him either the dispenser of fame or the criterion of character."<sup>3</sup>

Randolph and he, Quincy further said, however, were upon friendly and confidential terms, as far as it was possible to be so with a man so wayward and versatile

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Josiah Quincy*, 94.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 266.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, 304.



in his friendships and enmities as he had shown himself. Nor did Quincy fail to say that he had seen no evidence of any disposition on the part of Randolph not to do justice to him. If there was any, he was inclined to think that it was due to the fact that, next to the name of Timothy Pickering, his name was the most obnoxious to the Southern States. There was really no reason why this letter should have been colored by pique, for, in a second letter to his wife, Quincy, in touching upon the idea which she had formed that Randolph was inclined to be unjust to him, stated that he had said to Randolph the day before: "Randolph, have you any news from Virginia?"; that Randolph had replied: "Yes!" very significantly, and had put into his hands a letter from a Mr. Leigh, a gentleman of distinction there, who, in acknowledging the receipt of a speech by Quincy from Randolph, had expressed himself upon it in a style very far too flattering for him to repeat; and that Randolph had evidently seemed gratified, although he did not say a word except, "*That man's opinion is worth something, Quincy.*"<sup>1</sup>

But it was the kind attentions paid by Quincy to Tudor, when Tudor was at Cambridge, that implanted in Randolph's breast a sentiment of lasting friendship for him. Not only did Quincy take Tudor on from Washington to Cambridge, when the young man became a matriculate of that institution, but he secured for him the privilege of living in the home, and under the immediate eye, of President Kirkland.<sup>2</sup> He even undertook to keep up an oversight of Tudor's pecuniary outlays—a task which proved by no means a sinecure; for while the boy was not irregular in his habits, and soon acquired the reputation of being a brilliant student, he was somewhat profuser in his expenditures, especially in the gratifi-

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 304.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 267.



cation of what Joseph Bryan called the love for the smack of the whip, than his circumstances really warranted.<sup>1</sup>

Quincy has been the means of preserving for us some of the phrases in which Randolph had such a happy way of hitting off his ideas, however intemperate. Freedom of commerce and navigation was never advocated in more sweeping terms than it was by Randolph, if what Jacob Lewis told Quincy at a dinner party in New York about a conversation that had taken place between Randolph and one of the Departmental Heads at Washington is to be believed:

“He who carries away the produce of my plantation,” declared Randolph, “is like him who *blacks my shoes*; so long as he does it in the best manner, and at the cheapest rate, I employ him; but, if another will do either upon more advantageous terms, be he foreigner or native, the other must and ought to lose his employment.”<sup>2</sup>

Our thanks are also due to Quincy for bringing to our knowledge what was thought of Randolph by Sir Augustus Foster, the British Minister at Washington at the beginning of the War of 1812.

“This, however, I will tell you,” Sir Augustus observed in a letter which he wrote to Quincy some six years after Randolph’s death. “That I have a foible for your division of the country of Transatlantidis; that is, for New England, which I look upon as nearly as much superior to the districts south of the Susquehanna as old England is to Hungary or Sicily. Randolph once told me that slaves were necessary to form a gentleman; but Randolph knew little of Connecticut and Massachusetts, and would have made an excellent Russian nobleman.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 342.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 76.

<sup>3</sup> Turin, July 18, 1839, *Id.*, 462.

When Quincy read these words, he doubtless did not forget those other words which Randolph had written to him a year or so after Sir Augustus had shaken the dust of Transatlantidis from his feet, and gone back to England: "The curse of slavery, however,—an evil daily magnifying, great as it already is—embitters many a moment of the Virginian landholder who is not duller than the clod beneath his feet."<sup>1</sup>

And, if he had ever heard what Randolph had said of Sir Augustus in a letter to Rufus King, we may be sure that he had not forgotten that. "It seems to me," said Randolph, "that the various administrations of the British Government fell into the error of supposing that narrow instructions would cure the defect of narrow understandings when they sent us such men as Merry and Erskine and Foster, who, although a good fellow, was no Solomon, you know."<sup>2</sup>

In the correspondence between Sir Augustus and Quincy we also find a very extraordinary tribute to the singular influence exerted in the House by Randolph's peculiar methods of parliamentary warfare, which would have still more interest for us, if it had been accompanied by just a little fuller recognition of the fact that to Quincy, at any rate, Randolph's relations were always those of heartfelt and sincere respect, and, so far as the mutual repulsions of their several environments would permit, of affection:

"Poor Randolph! America could well have spared a better man. In a highly civilized state of society, and possessing a cultivated intellect, he had the temper and spirit of his savage ancestress, Pocahontas. His tomahawk was continually in his hand, and his scalping-knife ever hung at his side. His warfare was never of the regular, but always of the partisan, character. Enemies he could not destroy he never failed to

<sup>1</sup> Richm., Mar. 22, 1814, *Life of Quincy*, 350.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Nov. 5, 1818, *Life, etc., of Rufus King*, by King, v. 1, 167-168.

cripple. Those he could not conquer, he was apt to leave skinned alive. Before his death, his eccentricities had become so great that he was thought by many to be deranged. But peace to his ashes."<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the letters written by Randolph to Quincy on political topics, from which we have made free extracts in a preceding chapter, there are two others of a different character, which we do not feel that we can pass over or even abridge, except slightly. The second of the two letters is the last that Quincy ever received from Randolph, and we agree with Edmund Quincy in thinking that its liveliness, wit and pathos make it a fit conclusion of their correspondence:

(I)

"It would require an essay to answer your inquiries; however, I will try what can be done within the compass of a letter. Before the Revolution, the lower country of Virginia, pierced for more than a hundred miles from the seaboard by numerous bold and navigable rivers, was inhabited by a race of planters of English descent, who dwelt on their principal estates on the borders of these noble streams. The proprietors were generally well educated,—some of them at the best schools of the mother country; the rest at William and Mary, then a seminary of *learning* under able classical masters. Their habitations and establishments, for the most part spacious and costly, in some instances displayed taste and elegance. They were the seats of hospitality. The possessors were gentlemen; better-bred men were not to be found in the British dominions. As yet party spirit was not. This fruitful source of mischief had not then poisoned society. Every door was open to those who maintained the appearance of gentlemen. Each planter might be said, almost without exaggeration, to have a harbor at his door. Here he shipped his *crop* (tobacco), mostly on his own account, to London, Bristol, or Glasgow, and from those ports received every article of luxury or necessity (not raised by himself) which his household and even his distant

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 459.

*quarters* required. For these, a regular order was made out twice a year. You may *guess* at the state of things when a bill of exchange on London for half a crown was sometimes drawn to pay for a dinner at *the ordinary*. Did a lady want a jewel new-set, or a gentleman his watch cleaned, the trinket was sent *home*. Even now the old folks talk of 'going home to England.'

"Free living, the war, docking entails (by one sweeping act of Assembly), but chiefly the statute of distributions, undermined these old establishments. Bad agriculture, too, contributed its share. The soil of the country in question, except on the margin of the rivers, where it *was* excellent, is (originally) a light, generous loam upon a sand; once exhausted, it is *dead*. Rice never constituted an object of culture with us. The tide swamps—a mine of wealth in South Carolina—here produce only miasma. You will find some good thoughts on this head, and on the decay of our agriculture generally in our friend J. T.'s (John Taylor, of Caroline) whimsical, but sensible, work, *Arator*.

"Unlike you, we had a *church* to pull down, and its destruction contributed to swell the general ruin. The temples of the living God were abandoned, the *glebe* sold, the University pillaged. The old mansions, where they have been spared by fire (the consequence of the poverty and carelessness of their present tenants), are fast falling to decay; the families, with a few exceptions, dispersed from St. Mary's to St. Louis; such as remain here sunk into obscurity. They, whose fathers rode in coaches, and drank the choicest wines now ride on saddlebags, and drink grog, when they can get it. What enterprise or capital there was in the country retired westward; and, in casting your eyes over the map of Virginia, you must look between the *North Mountain* and a line drawn through Petersburg, Richmond and Alexandria for the population and wealth of the State. The western district is almost a wilderness. The eastern tract, from the falls of the great rivers to the shore of the Chesapeake,—the region above all others in United America the best adapted for commerce—becomes yearly more deserted. Deer and wild turkeys are nowhere so plentiful in Kentucky as near Williamsburg. I say, 'the

shore of the Chesapeake,' because our *Eastern Shore* (the two counties that lie beyond that bay) must be excluded from this description. There, the old Virginian character is yet (I am told) to be found in its greatest purity; although before the Revolution it was a poor, despised region. Here are the descendants of those men who gave an asylum to Sir W. Berkeley during Bacon's rebellion. The land, although thin, bears a good price, and is inhabited by a hospitable, unmixed people. On *this*, the western shore, land within two hours' sail of Norfolk may be bought for one-half the money which the same quality would command one hundred and fifty miles from tide-water. The present just, necessary, and glorious war has not, as you may suppose, served to enhance its price. Perhaps, after all, you may say that I reassert a fact, when asked for the cause. The country is certainly unhealthy; more so than formerly; but this is only one of the causes of its depopulation. Bears and panthers have within a few years made their appearance in the neighborhood of the Dragon and Dismal Swamps.

"You are once more enjoying the '*uda mobilibus pomaria rivis*' of Quincy. When you count over the *olentis uxores mariti* (if the dignity of a merino will brook such an epithet), and reckon your lambs before yeaning, you are not likely to be interrupted by any unpleasant Transatlantic recollections. Do you know that you have written a letter of three pages without a syllable on the subject of 'Foreign Relations'? This bespeaks the quiet of the heart within. You and I, whom the delators of the post-office are ready to swear they have detected in carrying on a treasonable correspondence, to be writing about 'old times' that 'are changed'—'old manners gone'—tobacco and wool! . . . The smaller critics would perhaps remind me that Horace's flock were of the hairy, or no-wool breed, and that they must have been goats. But that is by no means a necessary consequence. Did not Mr. Jefferson import sheep without wool (sent him, I presume, by some brother *savant* of the Academy of Lagado), and does Captain Lemuel Gulliver give us any reason to doubt that in point of antiquity that illustrious people flourished long before the age of Augustus? This valuable breed of sheep, although

destitute of wool, had a double allowance of horns,—there being four to each head, two of them projecting like the fabled unicorn's. With these the ram actually tore out the entrails of a poor child in Washington, and killed it. (See Malthus on Population.) There is an apparent levity in this letter which is foreign to my real temper, at this moment especially. I do but mock myself. 'It may deceive all hearts save that within.' If you see Tudor, tell him his brother is better, much better."<sup>1</sup>

## (2)

"Your letter was 'right welcome unto me,' as my favorite old English writers say or sing, but much more welcome was the bearer of it. Son of yours, even with far less claims from his own merit than this gentleman obviously possesses, shall never be shown the 'cauld shoulther.' I hope that you'll pardon my using the Waverley tongue, which I must fear bodes no good to the good old English aforesaid, and which I shall therefore leave to them that like it,—which I do not, out of its place,—and not always there. In short, I have not caught the literary 'Scotch fiddle,' and, in despite of Dr. Blair, do continue to believe that Swift and Addison understood their own mother tongue as well as any Sawney, 'benorth tha' Tweed.' Nay, further, not having the fear of the Edinburgh Reviewers before my eyes, I do not esteem Sir Walter to be a poet, or the Rev. Dr. Chalmers a pulpit orator. But, as I do not admire Mr. Kean, I fear that my reputation for taste is, like my earthly tabernacle, in a hopeless state.

"The fuss made about that mountebank, who is the very fellow, although not 'periwig-pated,' that Shakespeare describes, has, I confess, disgusted me not a little. What are we made of to take sides in the factions of the circus (green or blue), and to doat upon the professions of 'feeling' and 'sentiment' and 'broken-heartedness' from the lips or pen of a fellow whose vocation it is to deal in those commodities,—who has a stock of them in his travelling pack, like an Irish fortune-hunter on a visit to a 'young ladies' seminary' of learning,

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Va., July 1, 1814, *Life of Quincy*, 353.

anything but good? For my part, like Burchell in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, I say nothing but cry, 'Fudge!'

"By the common law, stage-players come under the description and penalties of vagrants and sturdy beggars. To be sure, Shakespeare was on the stage, and Garrick and Siddons and Kemble were stage-players; but, you know, *exceptio probat regulam*.

"I did not (when I began) intend to have turned the page, but must do it to say that the stage comes emphatically under Lord Byron's sweeping ban and anathema against the world, as

'One wide den of thieves, or—what you will.'

"My right hand has forgot its cunning. With great respect and every good wish to you and yours, I am, dear sir, your obedient servant,  
JOHN RANDOLPH of Roanoke."

"P.S. I often think on *Auld Lang Syne* (more Scotch). Though 'seas between us broad have rolled' since those days, I have a perfect recollection of most of them. I can see you now just as you were when a certain great man that now is was beginning to be; but why revive what is better forgot? One thing, however, I will revive (what I shall never forget), your kindness to my poor boy,—'the last of the family'—for I am nothing; it will soon be utterly extinct. He lies in Cheltenham graveyard. I bought the ground. I need not say that it was my first pilgrimage in England. As you go from the Town to the Spring, he lies on the right hand . . . of the pathway through the churchyard, leaving the church on your left."<sup>1</sup>

Strange as the fact may seem, Randolph not only acquired a friendly footing with Quincy, but even with such a rabid Federalist as Timothy Pickering. In one of his letters to his wife, written about the time of the Compensation Bill, Pickering said: "Mr. Randolph is the most uncommon man I ever knew. He has learning, sagacity, and a vivid imagination, with an extraordinary memory." Notwithstanding his discursiveness, he was

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Feb. 20, 1826, *Life of Quincy*, 421.



listened to with attention, Pickering further said, "because there are some profound thoughts, some biting satire, and some strokes of humor throughout his discourses."<sup>1</sup> So truly cordial did the intercourse between Pickering and Randolph become that Pickering presented Randolph with a proof impression of his profile drawn by Saint Mémin, and a copy of an engraving of his portrait which had just been taken in New York by Waldo, and received in turn from Randolph the last copy that he had of an engraving which had been taken of his miniature painted by Wood in 1809.<sup>2</sup> Far more valuable, doubtless, to Pickering than his gift was the tribute paid to him by Randolph in a speech delivered in the House on Jan. 30, 1817:

"No man in the United States," Randolph said, "has been more misunderstood, no man more *reviled*, and that is a bold declaration for *me* to make, than Alexander Hamilton, unless, perhaps, my friend, the venerable member from Massachusetts, who generally sits in that seat (pointing to the seat generally occupied by Colonel Pickering), and whom, whatever may be said of him, all will allow to be an honest man. The other day, when on the compensation question, he was speaking of his own situation, when his voice faltered and his eyes filled at the mention of his own poverty, I thought I would have given the treasures of Dives himself for his feelings at that moment; for his poverty, Mr. Speaker, was not the consequence of idleness, extravagance or luxury, nor of the gambling spirit of speculation. It was honorable poverty after a life spent in a laborious service, and in the highest offices of trust under Government, during the war of Independence as well as under the present constitution. Sir, I have not much, although it would be grave affectation in me to plead poverty; whatever I have, such as it is, I would freely give to the venerable gentleman, if he will accept it, to have it said over my grave, as it may be said with truth over his, 'Here lies the man who was

<sup>1</sup> *Sketch of Randolph* by Mrs. Donaldson, Mrs. Norman James MSS.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



avored with the confidence of Washington and the enmity of his successor."<sup>1</sup> (a)

It is not easy to speak of Quincy in connection with Randolph without also speaking of Harmanus Bleecker, who served in the House from 1811 to 1813, and was appointed by Van Buren in 1839 Chargé d'Affaires at the Hague, where, when he was first presented at Court, his Dutch, derived from the classic models of Dutch Literature, won this remarkable compliment from the King of Holland: "Sir, you speak better Dutch than we do in Holland."<sup>2</sup> After Bleecker and Quincy were thrown together in the House, they became intimate friends, and to such a degree was the good opinion, in which Bleecker was held by Quincy, shared by Randolph that, on one occasion, the latter wrote to Quincy: "Bleecker is, indeed, all that you say of him and *more*."<sup>3</sup> Many letters passed between Randolph and Bleecker, a considerable number of which we have reason to believe are still in existence, but, after the most diligent inquiry, we have been unable to obtain access to them. A portrait of Randolph, presented by Bleecker to the State of Virginia, is one of the most attractive of all the portraits that were ever taken of him.

And, before leaving the State of New York, we should also mention the fact that for few men in public life did Randolph cherish a profounder respect, or a more cordial regard, than he did for Rufus King. He spent the evening with King at Jamaica, on Long Island, after the famous race between Eclipse and Henry, and his favorable opinion of him was so much strengthened by this incident that, in referring to the debates on the Missouri Compromise, in which King had won such conspicuous distinction, he

<sup>1</sup> *Sketch of Randolph*.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Quincy*, 306; Lanman's *Dict. of Congress*, 42

<sup>3</sup> Richm., Dec. 11, 1813, *Life of Quincy*, 341.

said: "Ah, sir! only for that unfortunate vote on the Missouri Question, *he* would be our man for the Presidency. He is, Sir, a genuine English gentleman of the old school, just the right man for these degenerate times; but, alas! it cannot be."<sup>1</sup> In Washington, King and Randolph were often the recipients of social civilities at each other's hands; and, at Randolph's request, King seems to have had his portrait painted by Wood for Randolph. The letter, written by Randolph to King on this subject, is a good example of the profound deference with which King, who was a much older man than Randolph, was always treated by him, both because of the difference in their ages and because of the admiration which Randolph entertained for his character and abilities:

"If my memory does not deceive me," Randolph said, "you made me a sort of promise last winter to give Mr. Wood a sitting for me. Will you pardon the reminding you of this engagement by one who is too sensible of the kindness he received from you not to wish for a memorial of him by whom it was shown. Your portrait will make a most suitable companion for that of the Chief Justice, who was good enough to sit for me; and I mention this to show you that you will not be in company that should disgrace you.

"On public affairs I dare not touch lest I should subject myself to the imputation cast on the coxcomb who presumed to address Hannibal on the art of war.

"Wishing you an agreeable session of Congress, I am, with the most profound respect, dear sir, your obliged and obedient servant,  
JOHN RANDOLPH of Roanoke."<sup>2</sup>

In another letter, Randolph asked King to order a lot of apple, peach, pear, plum, cherry, nectarine and apricot trees for him from two nurserymen in King's neighborhood, named Prince; and also some rare evergreens. This

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 43.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Dec. 8, 1817, *Life of Rufus King*, by King, v. 1, 83.

is all commonplace enough, but when was such a simple request ever more gracefully introduced:

"My letters," he said, "although they have been neither prolix nor numerous, may perhaps remind you of the parody humorously ascribed to Lord Mount Morris, in the once famous probationary Ode of the Rolliad. Our intercourse has been, indeed, on terms of 'Hibernian reciprocity.' A favor is asked, and not only graciously accorded, but enhanced by the very valuable information, which it is kindly as well as obligingly made the occasion of communicating to one no longer in the world, or connected with affairs, or with public men, (even by relations of hostility). But you, my dear Sir, have too long and deep experience of man and his nature not to know that this is the very way in which a '*pauvre honteux*' may be converted into a sturdy beggar. To release you however from my importunity, let me cut short my tale."<sup>1</sup>

The fruit trees produced some palatable fruit for us too in the form of another letter from Randolph to King, in which they are mentioned:

"On my return home, a few days ago from the falls of the Roanoke," Randolph said, "I was most agreeably saluted by your letter of the 20th of October, which arrived a few minutes before me. The desire to thank you for it, to express somewhat of my sense of your kindness (I can find no other word), and to keep myself alive in the memory of one, who has distinguished me by attentions that I can never forget, dictate this reply; for I can readily conceive, having in such matters 'some shallow spirit of judgment,' that, immersed as you are in affairs, you could most readily dispense with letters of compliment, written sometimes out of mere idleness, but oftener from sheer vanity; as silly people pester great folks with cards, taking care to make a prompt display of such as they may receive from the aforesaid great folks, and with equal care keeping out of sight the names of humbler visitors. But, indeed, I do myself injustice to term mine letters of compli-

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Sep. 26, 1818, *Life, etc., of Rufus King*, by King, v. 1, 164-165.

ment. They are something better in design, altho' they may be worse in execution.

"I have ofttimes thought it a weakness in Government to restrain their envoys &c. within such narrow limits as their instructions commonly afford. Sure I am that, in private life, this mode of management will not do. If they would be more particular in selecting the agent, and less so in drawing the instructions, I am inclined to think matters would go on better. This jealousy must arise from a fear that the foreign court will gain over the Minister, or from that ridiculous passion 'for too much regulation', against which a certain acquaintance of ours declaims in his writings, whilst his practice affords only examples to the contrary. It is the misfortune of this 'illustrious man' that his public conduct should invariably run counter to his avowed principles. This itch for regulating everything, this passion for details is one of those weaknesses, from which great minds are not always exempt, in which little ones can always imitate them. The great Frederic was not entirely free from this infirmity; and I have been sometimes led to think that [when] Paul of Russia was regulating knee-buckles and shoe-ties, and Mr. Jefferson every detail of the streets and public buildings at Washington, from the ornaments of the Senate Chamber to the cells in the county jail, each flattered himself that he was walking in the footsteps of Frederic, because that wise man chose *occasionally* to play the fool. . . .

"After this tirade on the subject of instructions, give me leave to say that I should not have presumed to fetter Mr. King with any; neither did I intend it, for I thought the Princes, whose rival advertisements have stared me in the face this twelve month, were your only nursery-men, &c. . . . It gives me great satisfaction to hear that Mrs. King's health will enable her to accompany you to Washington; where, after all, I suspect, is the best winter society on this continent. I wish you both a pleasant season and should be pleased to enjoy the pleasure of joining some of your parties this winter; but I have been gadding abroad all Autumn and must look, or pretend to look, a little at affairs at home.

"On my excursion to the falls of Roanoke, I fell in with Macon, whom you will shortly see. His conversation put me

in mind of public measures which had long since gone out of my mind, but I did not pick up enough from him to enable me to add a line upon their subject; under such circumstances, I am not without hope of obtaining a draught from the fountain-head.

"Your faithful, humble servant, JOHN RANDOLPH of Roanoke."<sup>1</sup>

Of Randolph's relations to his kinsman, Chief Justice Marshall, with whose portrait he wished the portrait of King to be mated, we have already said nearly all that need be said. The fall of the mighty welding hammer, that the Chief Justice brought down from time to time so sagaciously and fearlessly upon the loose joints of the National Government, and his provincial vernacular occasionally jarred for a moment upon Randolph's nerves, but, throughout his life, on the whole, even his most wayward and intolerant impulses were held completely captive by the powerful mind, the kind heart, and the native simplicity of Marshall; and it may well be regretted that, Marshall left behind him, we believe, no oral or written word lastingly to authenticate the cordial regard for Randolph which his conduct never failed to exhibit whenever there was any reason for its manifestation. In one of Randolph's letters to Dr. Brockenbrough, the names of John Marshall and Alexander Hamilton are coupled in such a way as to afford another proof of the fact that Randolph gave to ability its just due, no matter how partisan the medium through which he had to examine it.

"I cannot believe it possible," he said, "that the Ch. J. can vote for the present incumbent. To say nothing of his denunciation of all the most respectable federalists, the implacable hatred and persecution of this man and his father of the memory of Alexander Hamilton (the best and ablest man of his party, who basely abandoned him for old Adams' loaves

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Nov. 5, 1818, *Id.*, v. 6, 167, 168.

and fishes), would, I suppose be an insuperable obstacle to the C. J.'s support of the younger A. When I say the best and ablest of his party, I must except the Ch. J. himself, who surpassed H. in moral worth, and, although not his equal as a statesman, in point of capacity is second to none. Hamilton has stood very high in my estimation ever since the contest between Burr and Jefferson; and I do not envy a certain Ex-P. or your predecessor, the glory of watching his stolen visits to a courtesan, and disturbing the peace of his family by their information. I have a fellow-feeling with H. He was the victim of rancorous enemies, who always prevail over lukewarm friends. He died because he preferred death to the slightest shade of imputation or disgrace. He was not suited to the country, or the times; and, if he lived now, might be admired by a few, but would be thrust aside to make room for any fat-headed demagogue, or dexterous intriguer. His conduct, too, on the acquisition of Louisiana, proved how superior he was to the Otises and Quincys, and the whole run of Yankee federalists."<sup>1</sup>

In Delaware, Randolph had a warm friend in Cæsar A. Rodney, who was a member of Congress from 1803 to 1805, and was appointed by Jefferson to the office of Attorney General. "That good fellow Rodney," is the manner in which he describes him in one of his letters, after they had served together as managers in the Chase impeachment case.

In Maryland, he had several intimates besides Joseph H. Nicholson. One of his friends in that State was Daniel Murray, of whom he said on one occasion, when chiding Francis Scott Key for not sending him "a dish of chit-chat:" "There's that fine fellow D. M——y, whom you have not once named."<sup>2</sup>

Another Maryland friend was Charles Sterrett Ridgeley, who owned a country place, named Oaklands, near Elkridge Landing, in Howard County, Maryland, to which

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 296

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 110.

Randolph was in the habit of frequently resorting for the purpose of escaping from the heavy tax imposed upon his delicate frame by his arduous duties at Washington, and of enjoying the society of the group composed of Baltimore and other friends, which Ridgeley had drawn around him: "That gallant-spirited man, Sterrett Ridgeley," were the terms in which Randolph spoke of this friend in a letter to Nicholson, written just after the threatened duel between Randolph and Eppes had sputtered out, with the usual effort on each side to refer the first suggestion of the reconciliation to the other.<sup>1</sup> In one letter to Dr. Dudley, Randolph mentions that Ridgeley had arrived the night before at Georgetown, to Randolph's "great joy."<sup>2</sup> In another, he tells Dr. Dudley that he had recently left "the hospitable mansion" of his friend, Charles Sterrett Ridgeley.<sup>3</sup> In Randolph's letters to Francis Scott Key there are numerous references to Ridgeley. In one, written during the War of 1812, Randolph says:

"When you see Ridgeley, commend me to him and his amiable wife. I am really glad to hear that he is quietly at home instead of scampering along the Bay shore or inditing dispatches. Our upper country has slid down upon the lower. Nearly half our people are below the falls; both my brothers are gone."<sup>4</sup>

Subsequently, when Ridgeley was a candidate for a seat in the Maryland Legislature, Randolph doubted his fitness for it; on alleged grounds, however, that were as creditable to him as they were discreditable to the public life of which he was a part. He was sorry, Randolph told Key, to see their "noble-spirited friend, Sterrett Ridgeley" engaged in politics.

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 3, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Georgetown, Nov. 27, 1812, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 128.

<sup>3</sup> June 1, 1813, *Id.*, 132.

<sup>4</sup> Roanoke, Jul. 17, 1813; Garland, v. 2, 17.



"He is truly unfit for public life. Do you ask why? You have partly answered the question. He is too honest, too unsuspicious, too deficient in *cunning*. I would as soon recommend such a man to a hazard table and a gang of sharpers as to a seat in any deliberative assembly in America."<sup>1</sup>

All this becomes decidedly plainer when, a little later on, Randolph, contrasting mentally the universal suffrage of Maryland with the freehold suffrage of Virginia, and, going back to his Milton for a phrase, which is even more significant in our time than it was in Milton's or Randolph's, says: "Electioneering is upon no very pleasant footing anywhere, but with you, when the '*base proletarian rout*' are admitted to vote, it must be peculiarly irksome and repugnant to the feelings of a gentleman."<sup>2</sup>

A devoted friendship existed between Francis Scott Key of Maryland, and Randolph. On Randolph's side, it included Mrs. Key and her children, to whom he was in the habit of frequently sending affectionate messages. Indeed, if any one of Randolph's friends was married, his friendship for him was almost invariably bestowed upon all the members of his family also. The interest, however, that attaches to the correspondence between Randolph and Key is mainly religious, and a most effective tract would be a little pamphlet containing the spiritual anxieties, misgivings and doubts which Randolph poured into the ears of Key, and the soothing and consoling assurances with which that talented, pure-minded and upright man, to whom the invisible universe was quite as real as the visible, sought to bring peace to the agitated mind of his friend. Better preaching it would be hard to find anywhere than is to be found in one or two of Key's letters to Randolph; preaching that is all the more effective because of its lack of professional dogmatism and of its likeness merely to the quiet communings of the human

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Sep. 12, 1813, *Id.*, v. 2, 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



soul with itself. If anything could have been sufficient to make religion a thing of practical helpfulness, solace and joy to Randolph, instead of an affrighting nightmare, it might well have been the influence of Key. As early as Feb. 8, 1811, he wrote to Nicholson that he knew no man "more intrinsically estimable than Frank Key."<sup>1</sup> Ten years later, after he had been almost as intimate with Key as a brother, he paid this striking tribute to him in a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough; a tribute all the more striking because the sunshine with which it irradiated Key is painfully, though poetically, contrasted with the shadows which encompassed himself:

"Yesterday," he said, "I was to have dined with Frank Key, but was not well enough to go. He called here the day before, and we had much talk together. He perseveres in pressing on towards the goal, and his whole life is spent in endeavoring to do good for his unhappy fellow-men. The result is that he enjoys a tranquillity of mind, a sunshine of the soul, that all the Alexanders of the earth can neither confer nor take away. This is a state to which I can never attain. I have made up my mind to suffer, like a man condemned to the wheel or the stake. Strange as you may think it, I could submit without a murmur to pass the rest of my life 'on some high, lonely tower, where I might out-watch the bear with thrice great Hermes,' and exchange the enjoyments of society for an exemption from the plagues of life. These press me down to the very earth, and, to rid myself of them, I would gladly purchase an annuity, and crawl into some hole where I might commune with myself, and be still."<sup>2</sup>

Of Edward Lloyd, the brother-in-law of Joseph H. Nicholson and Francis Scott Key, Randolph wrote laconically to Nicholson: "I love the man."<sup>3</sup>

Afterwards, in one of his letters to Randolph, Key

<sup>1</sup> Babel, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, *circa*, 1821.

<sup>3</sup> Richm., May 31, 1807, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

wrote that Lloyd had told Mrs. Key that Randolph never wrote to him.<sup>1</sup> And this was Randolph's reply, which, like many other letters, contained more between its lines than in them:

"Our quondam friend Lloyd, for 'quondam friends are no rarity with me'—I made this answer at the ordinary at our court to a gentleman who had returned from Rappahannock and told me that he had seen some of our 'quondam friends.' It was casually uttered, but I soon saw how deeply it was felt by a person at table whom I had not before observed. To return to Lloyd, he cannot with any show of justice complain of 'my giving him up.' The saddle is on the other horse; he is a spoiled child of fortune, and testy old bachelors make a poor hand of humoring spoiled children. Lloyd required to be flattered, and I would not perform the service. I would hold no man's regard by a base tenure."<sup>2</sup> (a)

In one of his letters to Nicholson, Randolph recommends to his favor a Mr. Sargeant, of Petersburg, Va. He tells Nicholson that he is an old friend of his, that he is one of the most agreeable and amiable men that he has ever known, and is a "travelled gentleman;" indeed, what we would now term a "globe trotter."<sup>3</sup>

Closely associated with James M. Garnett in the mind and life of Randolph, was the celebrated John Taylor of Caroline, whose residence—Hazelwood—was not very far from Elmwood—Garnett's residence—and was close to one of the land routes by which Randolph reached Washington from Roanoke. For the character of Taylor, as a statesman, he entertained a high degree of respect; notwithstanding the crabbed and artificial diction which make his productions anything but easy reading. Especially was Randolph attracted to Taylor by the fact that he was one of the nicest and sternest sticklers for the Vir-

<sup>1</sup> Aug. 30, 1813, Garland, v. 2, 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, v. 2, 20.

<sup>3</sup> Petersburg, Apr. 6, 1805, Nicholson MSS. Libr. Cong.

ginia conception of State Sovereignty. He was the author, besides, under the *nom-de-plume* of "Arator," of a series of agricultural essays, which Randolph, as he wrote Quincy, regarded as sensible, though whimsical. Nor was Taylor a mere theoretical farmer; as farmers who desert the plow for the pen are so likely to be; for, in one of his letters to Garnett, Randolph, while quite complacent about the condition of Roanoke, frankly confesses that it is in no such state of improvement as Hazelwood. With all his respect for Taylor, the latter's treatise on banking was too much for his patience:

"I am glad to hear that Arator is not idle," he wrote to Garnett. "For his book on banking I would not give a farthing. My creed on the subject is so firmly fixed that I would as soon read the Koran with a view to conversion. For heaven's sake, get some worthy person (if you decline the task yourself) to do the second edition into *English*. I have not the book about me, nor within reach, but it is a monument of the force and weakness of the human mind; forcible, concise, perspicuous, feeble, tedious, obscure, unintelligible. I remember one expression: 'inferior superiorities' applied I think to Indian corn."<sup>1</sup>

It was Taylor who wrote on one occasion to Creed Taylor: "Bank stock cannot be incarcerated within geographical bounds; it flies, like the vulture, towards the place where its prey is to be found."<sup>2</sup>

At Hazelwood, after his retirement from Congress, with Randolph occasionally passing near his home, when journeying to or from Washington, Taylor was not unlike an old cavalry horse turned out to grass, when he sees a squadron of horse coming down the road on the other side of the pasture fence. Once, when reproached by Taylor for failing to stop at Hazelwood, Randolph wrote to him

<sup>1</sup> Richm., Feb. 14, 1814, Garnett MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Nov. 25, 1803; Creed Taylor MSS.

that he "had been too much pleased with his reception at his house ever to pass it willingly."¹ (a)

Three intimate friends of Randolph in the later stages of his Congressional career were Thomas H. Benton, of Missouri, James Hamilton, of South Carolina, and Mark Alexander, of Mecklenburg County, who was a member of the House from 1819 to 1833. Of the forms that the friendship between Randolph and Benton assumed, we have already said enough. After the Randolph-Clay duel, Randolph, as a token of his appreciation of the good feeling which Benton had exhibited in connection with it, gave him a gold seal, which he had had made for him in London, duly accompanied by a proper crest and family pedigree. Benton is said to have laughed the crest and pedigree aside, but the seal he wore until the day of his death.²

The devise, which Randolph made to him in his codicil executed in 1826 Benton promptly and positively refused to accept on the ground that he did not feel that he was entitled to such a benefaction at the expense of Randolph's heirs. To few persons is the reputation of Randolph more deeply indebted than to this friend, who knew him well, and almost invariably presents him to the reader in a highly amiable light.

The friendship between Randolph and Hamilton really dated back to one which existed between their mothers as early as the American Revolution.³ "He is a noble fellow," Randolph wrote of Hamilton to Andrew Jackson, but this was about a year before Jackson issued his Proclamation against Hamilton and the other South Carolina nullifiers.⁴

During the second winter that Mark Alexander, whom Randolph was in the habit of calling familiarly Mark

¹ Georgetown, April 15, 1810, *Mass. Hist. Soc.*

² *Thos. H. Benton*, by Jos. M. Rogers, 65.

³ Bouldin, 188.

⁴ Charlotte C. H., Nov. 8, 1831, *Jackson Papers*, v. 79, Libr. Cong.

Antony, spent at Washington, he was a member of the mess which consisted of Randolph, Macon, Benton, Edwards, Cobb, Tatnall and himself. Edwards, Cobb and Tatnall were all three warm friends of Randolph, too. Alexander's room was directly opposite to Randolph's and a highly confidential and intimate association sprang up between them. Alexander tells us that he often acted as Randolph's amanuensis, and frequently "resorted to his room, day and night, to hear his conversational powers, replete with wisdom and instruction." "I am proud to say," Alexander adds in this interesting letter, "I had his confidence to the day of his death." In the same letter, Alexander says of Benton: "Benton who roomed near him (Randolph) was always reserved, with no intimate association or friendship, but always master of the subject he discussed, and whose lamp never went out at night until one or two o'clock."<sup>1</sup>

Quite a different kind of a friend was Stephen H. Decatur. Yet a tie of genuine friendship seems to have existed between him and Randolph. Indeed, it was doubtless partly because of the shock inflicted on him by the death of Decatur in his duel with Commodore Barron that Randolph's mind gave way in the year 1820. His conduct at Decatur's funeral is thus depicted by John Quincy Adams in his *Memoirs*: "John Randolph was there, first walking, then backing his horse, then calling for his phaeton, and lastly crowding up to the vault, as the coffin was removed into it from the hearse—tricksy humors to make himself conspicuous."<sup>2</sup> A motion made by Randolph in the House that it should adjourn, so that its members could attend Decatur's funeral—a motion which also provided that the members of the House should wear crape in honor of Decatur's memory—was rejected by the House; and was again rejected when repeated on the

<sup>1</sup> July 2, 1876, Letter to Hugh B. Grigsby, Herbert F. Hutcheson MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Mar. 24, 1820, v. 5, 36.

succeeding day; and the same fate befell even a bare motion by Randolph looking to adjournment simply.<sup>1</sup> The House was too much horrified by the details of the tragic duel to give its approval to any motions of the sort.

In the will, which he executed in 1832, Randolph made the following bequests to his friend John Wickham:

“To John Wickham, Esq., my best of friends, without making any professions of friendship for me, and the best and wisest man I ever knew, except Mr. Macon, I bequeath my mare Flora and my stallion Gascoigne, together with the two old-fashioned double-handled silver cups and two tankards unengraved—the cups are here and the tankards or cans in Richmond—and I desire that he will have his arms engraved upon them and at the bottom these words: ‘From J. R. of Roanoke to John Wickham, Esquire, as a token of the respect and gratitude which he never ceased to feel for unparalleled kindness, courtesy and services.’”<sup>2</sup>

This was the effusion of a mind not too much impaired to remember the indulgence that Wickham had both generously and wisely accorded to Randolph in connection with the British debt, which had lowered over his early life, and of a heart that was quite as slow to ignore a benefit as it was quick to resent a slight or an indignity.

The home of John Wickham was at Hickory Hill, near Richmond, and here Randolph was often the guest of a host whose social charm was not less conspicuous than his rare abilities and accomplishments. It was of Wickham that William Wirt wrote these words:

“This gentleman, in my opinion, unites in himself a greater diversity of talents and acquirements than any other at the bar of Virginia. He has the reputation, and deserves it, of possessing much legal science; he has an exquisite and a highly cultivated taste for polite literature; a genius quick and fertile;

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 24, 1820, v. 5, 36.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 212.

a style pure and classic; a stream of perspicuous and beautiful elocution; an ingenuity which no difficulties can entangle and embarrass, and a wit whose vivid and brilliant coruscations can gild and decorate the darkest subject. His statements, his narrations, his arguments are all as transparent as the light of day. He reasons logically, and declaims very handsomely; his popularity is still in its flood, and he is justly considered as an honor and an ornament to his profession."<sup>1</sup>

As usual, Wirt paints with too flaring a brush, but, in this instance, he little exceeded the sober truth. One specimen of Wickham's wit was too good not to stick in Randolph's memory, and to be reported by him to Andrew Jackson. Speaking of an individual, who had undertaken to discharge the duties of the Post-office at Richmond, Wickham said that nobody could blame him for the notorious irregularities of his office, because he was never there.<sup>2</sup>

To his friend, Francis W. Gilmer, who was much his junior, Randolph's manner was quite different from what it was to his older friends. In other words, it was the sort of manner that is inspired, to use Randolph's own phrase by "the freshness and unhackneyed youth" when impelled by the ingenious enthusiasm of its nature to pay its homage to conspicuous distinction or worth.

In addition to the sketch, which he wrote of Randolph as an orator, Gilmer also harbored the idea of some day writing a biography of him, a thing that he was capitally qualified, with his rare scholarly attainments, sincerity, and balance of character, to do. The fact is mentioned in a letter which was written by Randolph to Dr. Brockenbrough after Gilmer's death:

"Poor Gilmer," he said, "he is another of the countless victims of calomel! I had indulged a hope that he would at least

<sup>1</sup> Little's "Hist. of Richmond," *So. Lit. Mess.*, v. 18, p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Mar. 6, 1832, *Jackson Papers*, v. 80, Libr. Cong.

live to finish his life of Fabricius. He told me some years ago that, if he survived me, he meant to write a biography of me; but what he would have found to say that is not in the newspapers I cannot conjecture."<sup>1</sup>

In an earlier letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, when it was becoming manifest that Gilmer was soon to be numbered among those that doubly die, in that they die so young, Randolph said:

"Among those who have shown me favor, I set high value upon the attachment of Frank Gilmer, and I, too, had a very strong desire, for his sake, that he would take the professorship. I was concerned to learn by a late letter from Mr. Barksdale that he looked very ill, and was more desponding than when B. saw him in March. When you write to him, name me among those who think often and always kindly of him."<sup>2</sup>

Tenderer still was the language which Randolph subsequently addressed to Gilmer himself:

"My dear friend, for such indeed you are, and such I am persuaded you believe yourself to be, although I never told you so before. Your letter written by another hand fills me with the deepest concern. I know it must be bad with you when you can't write. I wish I could be with you at your bedside. Weak as I am, I might do something to alleviate the tedium of your confinement; but, alas! even if my public duties did not present an insurmountable obstacle, the state of my health, of the weather, and the road would place an impassable gulf between us. But we shall yet meet I trust once more, and be as happy as our natures will allow us to be."<sup>3</sup>

Some of Gilmer's observations were entered in the Diary by Randolph. Among them is this passage in relation to the Scotch Highlands from a letter written by him to Elizabeth T. Coalter: "God forgive him that tempted

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 14, 1826, Garland, v. 2, 264.

<sup>2</sup> Jul. 8, 1825, *Id.*, v. 2, 238.

<sup>3</sup> Washington, Feb. 10, 1826, Bryan MSS.



me to go a-laking it—where bald, bleak mountains distil perpetual ink into the little holes below that they call lakes.”

Love of literature was among the principal ties that bound Randolph and Gilmer to each other. In one of his letters to Gilmer, Randolph tells him that he had found the shades of Roanoke so peaceful and so cool that it had been with difficulty that he could tear himself away from them at the expiration of near a month, but that nevertheless the monotony of the life at Roanoke and the utter oblivion into which he had fallen among the few that had once called themselves his friends, had induced a wish on his part to come down to the nether regions, and see what was passing in Pandemonium [i. e. Petersburg.] No sooner, however, he went on to say, was his head out of the shell than he had been assailed and stunned with the clamor of the “children of mammon wiser in their generation than the children of light.” Then, after mentioning the business matter hinted at in this academic fashion, he tells Gilmer that he could not stand indifferent to the good opinion or kind feelings of any person whose principles he respected; especially if to that character was united a congenial love of literature.<sup>1</sup> In the same letter, he told Gilmer that he held their nocturnal *tête-a-têtes* in cherished recollection.

Randolph's letters to Gilmer are among his best. In one, he tells him that, when he strikes his tent and commences Arab, he must head his course towards the camp of a brother Ishmaelite:

“If perchance,” he said, “I be from home, you will most probably hear of it in Amelia, or Prince Edward, and the worst that can befall you is a solitary cup of coffee, which old Essex will ‘be proud’ to furnish, and a clean bed, whilst your cavalry shall be supped like princes or rather like Houynmmmmns.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Petersburg, July 1, 1820, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, July 22, 1821, Bryan MSS.

In still another letter, Randolph, with the perfect frankness which belonged to his character, told Gilmer that he had such a sincere desire that he should never at least retrograde in anything, that he must beg him to return to his former well-defined compact and neat characters in exchange for the loose and straggling hand and wide intervals of the letter then before Randolph.<sup>1</sup> Another letter to Gilmer contains this dreary description of Washington society:

“When you go ‘a-hunting’ for lively and pleasant society, let me recommend New or Old Holland to you in preference to this ‘metropolis’ of darkness. The fields here are parched to desolation and the life we lead rather resembles that of a garrison in Siberia than the capital of a great country. Our dinners will bear no comparison with those of Richmond; such at least as I remember them. You go at half-past five, and are ushered into a dark room where you can make out nobody. A servant enters and lights up the theatre. About half-past six, you sit down to table, from which you are invited to rise in about an hour. To sit in the dining room five minutes after you have swallowed a cup of cold, weak, muddy coffee would be unpardonable illbreeding. The whole company instantly hurry off, and, if you come in a hired coach, you pay for that entertainment the price of a subscription ball. Of dinner conversation there is absolutely none. Before the benumbing influence of the time, the society in Richmond was in every respect preferable to what we have here, and I believe it is so yet.”<sup>2</sup>

However, it is only fair to Randolph to say that, in concluding this querulous letter, he terms it a “*triste-ennuyeuse* epistle.”

Every now and then, in his letters to Gilmer, Randolph puts off into the sea of politics:

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Feb. 21, 1824, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Jan. 12, 1821, Bryan MSS.

"Mr. Jefferson may praise, and Col. J. T. may write," he said on one occasion, "and a solitary newspaper may puff, but from the moment it came in fashion to drink 'Adams, Jefferson, and Madison' at Republican meetings, it was evident that Dunces the second would not like Dunces the first.

"Mr. J. himself did much to impair the principles upon which he was brought into power, but his successor gave them the *coup de grâce*. The recommendation of the Bank of the U. S. alone was a renunciation of the heresies of his 'report', and a reconciliation with the Holy Catholic Church of Expediency and Existing Circumstances. The present incumbent came in upon no principles, and, as he brought none with him, so he will carry none away with him. The state is a *tabula rasa*. I have satisfied myself on one point—that, whoever may be capable of ministering to the mind diseased of our body politic, I am not that man. Your remarks on the state of society, which has grown out of our system of legislation, are perfectly just. You are too good a surgeon to cut only skin deep for these carbuncles and cancers. It is well for you that you are not within ear-shot, or I should give you a homily that would put to shame the last of the worthy Archbishop of Grenada, but this writing is a poor substitute for soul-communion."<sup>1</sup>

In another letter, Randolph takes one of his flings at Henry Clay: "Among innumerable instances of false everything, he spoke of duties which England had *lain*. This beats 'crimes *malum in se* and crimes *malum prohibitum*,' and rivals 'have they not *fled* (correcting himself), have they not *flew* to arms'?"<sup>2</sup> (a) Here and there in the letters to Gilmer are allusions to the foreign professors whom Jefferson brought over to his newly established University of Virginia with the aid of Gilmer.

"But let me congratulate you on the safe arrival of your friend Key and his worthy compeers," he said in one of them, "and condole with the other eye (as is the fashion on the

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Jul. 22, 1821, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Mar. 9, 1824, Bryan MSS.

demise of a crown) at the not forthcoming of Johan Fabricius, 'Methinks he cometh late and tarryeth long.' One thing, however, is certain: that the Jewel is [as] safe in its casket as Cantabs. I take a warm and lively interest in all that regards your academical friends, and I wish with all my heart that they were to pass the spring in the lower country, where the swamps (not yet breathing pestilence) display their beautiful flora and the mocking birds sing, instead of being plunged into the red mud of those tame and disfigured hills that we dignify with the name of mountains."<sup>1</sup>

"Yours whate'er betide to the end of the chapter of life," appear to have been the last words that Randolph ever wrote to Gilmer; whose casement, to use the image of Tennyson, was slowly growing a glimmering square when he received them. Gilmer died on Feb. 25, 1826, in his 36th year, and of no young Virginian in civil life, dying so early, have his contemporaries ever been able to say more truthfully in the words of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Lover's Progress*,

"As many hopes hang on his noble head as blossoms on a bough in May, and sweet ones."

But Gilmer had been so long the victim of physical suffering that death must have signified to him not so much blasted ambition as surcease of suffering. "Pray, stranger," reads the epitaph over his grave at Pen Park, in Albemarle County, Virginia, written by himself, "allow one who never had peace while he lived, the sad immunities of the Grave, Silence and Repose."

Two friends to whom Randolph was drawn by their common passion for horse-flesh were Nathan Loughborough, of Grassland, near Washington, and Wm. R. Johnson, of Oakland, near Petersburg. At one time, Loughborough conceived the idea of publishing a sort of compilation made up of Randolph's table talk and excerpts

<sup>1</sup> Washington, undated.

from his speeches; but, beyond a few rough, but very valuable memoranda, the purpose was never carried into execution; a fact deeply to be regretted, as Loughborough seems to have been well qualified for the task. It was certainly not from want of Boswellian enthusiasm that it was never completed, for, in the Randolph will litigation, Loughborough was unwilling to admit that there was any flaw at any time, mental or otherwise, in the perfect crystal which he evidently conceived Randolph to be. The fact is all the more surprising because the letters written by Randolph in the latter part of his life to Loughborough, in which he betrayed his notion that ass' milk was for him the very elixir of life, plainly indicate a disordered intellect. Some of the letters from Randolph to Loughborough are little better than wormwood. Writing to the latter from London about the attacks being made on him in connection with the Russian Mission, he said:

"The barking of the curs in Congress meets with my supreme indifference. How some of those yelpers would turn tail and sneak off if I were to walk into the Hall, whether muffled in flannels or furs. They can do me no harm. It is the monstrous tissue of falsehoods, having not the slightest foundation in fact, disseminated by the Press in quarters of the Country, where they remain uncontradicted, that is capable of doing me injury. To borrow the words of a far greater man, 'if these things be true, then am I unfit for my country, if false (and of general belief), then is that country unfit for me.'"<sup>1</sup>

Worse still was this later exacerbation:

"I pray you spare me the subject of politics—State and Federal. I am supersaturated with disgust, and care not a straw what they do in Washington or Richmond. If you and Tom Wicker and Hamilton, and one or two other 'damn good friends' would keep your cursed politics to yourselves, and let

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 22, 1831, Nathan Loughborough MSS.

me alone about them, you would confer a singular favor on one whose last moments shall not be embittered or disturbed, if he can help it, with the whores and rogues who govern this undone country. I do earnestly entreat you to say nothing to me about negroes, bond or free, or banks, or Presidential elections, or candidates, &c. I give up the ship, but I am insured. The principal of my estate, at a forced sale, is enough for my wants, and she may go ashore and be d——d. My only regret is that I have wasted so much of my time, health, and money upon her. If it were to do over again, I would follow Girard's noble example and leave the 'ship of fools' to be navigated by fools and knaves, while I confined myself to what I could control and regulate."<sup>1</sup>

Nor is there much choice between this and the distempered picture of Virginia which he painted in a letter to Loughborough in the year 1828:

"I need not tell you that, from the time I entered Virginia, I found the vilest roads, if roads they may be called, and everything mean, dirty, and disgraceful, and out at elbows. The negroes alone are cheerful, docile, and obliging, and I verily think the most respectable, as they certainly are the most happy, population that you find upon the road. Fredericksburg, which I had known in the days of Miss Eda Carter, Fitzhugh, of Chatham, Mann Page, of Mansfield, I could hardly recognize; one bad, dirty, black inn, worse than a Spanish *venta*; every mark of squalor, poverty, and laziness. Whiskey and tobacco the chief articles of subsistence. In short, although obliged to stand up stoutly for my country, when out of it, everything I have seen but the cheerful society of slaves fills me with disgust and mortification and chagrin. They alone are better off, the whites being too lazy to make them work; and their labor [being] of no value, they laugh and grow fat."<sup>2(a)</sup>

At Oakland, the home of W. R. Johnson, Randolph was quite frequently a guest, and, with the passion that

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Feb. 16, 1832, Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Cartersville, James River, Apr. 30, 1828, Nathan Loughborough MSS.

both had for horses, there was much to cement the friendship which existed between them. No letter from Johnson to Randolph, so far as we are aware, is in existence, and the references to him in Randolph's general correspondence are by no means abundant. Curiously enough, it is to a dinner to which he was invited by "the celebrated Mr. Gulley of pugilistic fame," when he was in England in 1830, that we must go to ascertain the impression made upon his mind by Johnson's presence. Describing Gulley in a letter written to Macon from London, he says:

"He lives, or did live, at the Hare Park, about 5 miles from Newmarket, and has been for many years a *better* of the first magnitude. He has a beautiful, rustic wife, for whose sake he has sold Hare Park that she (who cannot be forced into the society of the wives and daughters of the associates of her husband, because she is an innkeeper's daughter) may be with her relatives in Yorkshire. Gulley is an uncommonly handsome, well-made and well-bred man. He lives like a Duke. We had 6 varieties of wine, all exquisite of their sort; two dishes of fish, and such venison as I never beheld elsewhere. He has all the quietness of manner that distinguishes our friend Wm. R. Johnson."<sup>1</sup>

During the last 12 months of his life, however, Randolph had a sporting grudge of some sort against Johnson, for in one of his letters to Loughborough he declined an offer from a Dr. Duvall to train his horses which had been communicated to him by Loughborough, and gave vent to his impatience in these hasty words:

"To tell you the truth, I have no wish to have any transactions, especially upon the subject of horses, north of the Potomac; and more especially in Maryland. I would never have my boys exposed to the infection of your black cholera for all the stakes that have been won for the last ten years, or that will be won for 10 years to come; but, if Dr. D. will train

<sup>1</sup> London, Dec. 8, 1830, *So. Lit. Mess.*, Nov. 1856, 382-385.



with his own grooms and helpers, he shall have two or three of my most promising nags; for I, too, am desirous of seeing W. R. J. roundly beaten and his——and ally in Baltimore and Philadelphia mortified and mulcted in a sum that the richest of the two may feel.”<sup>1</sup>

One of the closest friends that Randolph had in Richmond was Benjamin Watkins Leigh. After the frightful holocaust at the Richmond Theatre in the latter part of 1811, which brought consternation and agonizing grief to almost every prominent family in Richmond, Randolph wrote to James M. Garnett:

“On my return last evening from Sterrett Ridgely’s, I was encountered at Ross’ with the news of the late desolation at Richmond. Judge with what a dreadful and shuddering curiosity I forced my eyes over the catalogue of victims, among whom I trembled lest I should find Leigh or Brockenbrough. Thank Heaven! They are safe! But Juliana Harvie, her brother, Edwin, who nobly sacrificed his life in an ineffectual attempt to save his sister, and their charming niece, Mary Whitlocke, the darling of Mrs. Brockenbrough’s heart—especially since the loss of her son—have perished. Leigh writes that he fears for Mrs. B.’s intellects.”<sup>2</sup>

A fellow-planter to whom Randolph was truly attached, was Edmund Irby, of Nottoway County, Va. Irby had an interest in a plantation on the Banister River, in Halifax County, and, on his journeys to or from this plantation, he occasionally stopped over at Roanoke. Randolph was equally familiar with Irby’s home in Nottoway County, and, in one of his letters to Garnett, he spoke of it as being as healthy as any in the middle country. The Nottoway, he said, had been straightened and widened, and its lowgrounds perfectly drained for many miles; and Irby had erected a dyke along it to protect his lowlands

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Nov. 3, 1832, Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Georgetown, Jan. 1, 1812, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.



against floods.<sup>1</sup> In another letter to Garnett, he gave him this description of Irby:

"I am glad that you like my friend Irby. He is one of the best of good fellows, and a fine specimen 'rare now-a-days' of the old Virginia planter; industrious, plain, hospitable, fond of sport, but not sacrificing business to it. He is the best cultivator and improver of land that I know, and a more honest, unaffected creature never breathed. I could tell you some striking instances of his rare worth."<sup>2</sup>

A minor but significant proof of the esteem and affection, in which Irby was held by Randolph, is to be found in the fact that, after Irby's death, Randolph entered in the Diary the dates on which he was born and died, and also the birth dates of his widow and six children.

By his codicil, executed in 1826, he also bequeathed to Irby the next choice after that of his friend, William J. Barksdale, of any of his mares and fillies and his double-barrel gun.<sup>3</sup>

During the latter part of Randolph's life, a very cordial intimacy existed between him and William J. Barksdale, who resided at Clay Hill, in Amelia County, Va., and whose wife was a daughter of Randolph's friend, Mrs. Tabb, as was the wife of his friend, Dr. Bathurst Randolph. A regular correspondence was kept up between them, and Randolph was often a guest at Clay Hill. The opinion that he had of this friend may be inferred from what he said of him in a letter to Gilmer: "I spent nearly a week with Barksdale, whose house I find incomparably preferable to my own. He is indeed a finished gentleman, and one of the worthiest men in the world into the bargain."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 26, 1820, Theo. Garnett MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 10, 1832, Theo. Garnett MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Bouldin, 207.

<sup>4</sup> Roanoke, Mar. 31, 1825, Bryan MSS.

John Marshall, who resided at Charlotte Court House, was also a warm friend of Randolph. It was under his roof, as we have seen, that Randolph found an asylum, in 1832, when his mind forsook him. Marshall was a lawyer of high standing, and transmitted his practice and abilities to his son, the late Judge Hunter H. Marshall, of Charlotte County.

Randolph's other friends, who resided in the neighborhood of Bizarre or Roanoke, or along the highways, over which he rode through Southside Virginia, on his way to Washington, have already been sufficiently mentioned by us in a preceding chapter, in connection with his general social activities; but an additional word with regard to one or two of them may be pardoned. (*a*)

Randolph was so often absent at Washington that the care of Bizarre, while he resided there or was responsible for its management, was confided to Thomas A. Morton, as were likewise certain lots which he owned in Farmville. The relation between them was one of real friendship, and the following letter from Randolph to Morton merits perusal:

“MY DEAR FRIEND: This is no common-place address, for without profession or pretension such you have quietly and modestly proved yourself to be, while, like Darius, I have been

““Deserted in my utmost need,  
By those my former bounty fed.’

“All this is only acting according to your character, and you can hardly help it now, second nature being superadded to the first. In the whole course of my unprofitable life, I never received a letter *from a man* that affected me so deeply as yours of the 3rd.

“If I can, I will be with you on the 14th (the day before the sale). I will bring with me the original blotter of the sale, which Creed Taylor can verify, if he be not *civiliter mortuus*, as I greatly fear he is. There is nobody else left, unless it be our old friend Bedford. [Redford?] . . .

"But my dear friend, what are, or what ought to be, the cares of a man about property that believes himself to be dying, and almost, but not 'altogether' hopes it? I am now as much worse than when you saw me on my way to Buckingham, November court, as then I was worse than when I left London.

"I wish to sell the lots next the warehouse at cost, and interest if to be had, or exchange them for others, adjoining the lots I got from your father and of Wathell, or those on the branch; or I could sell all, or improve for the benefit of thankless heirs.

"He turns with anxious care and crippled hands  
His bonds of debt and mortgages of land.'

"A long credit to me is the same as a short one; I shan't outlive a bank discount.

"Caught like Bonaparte by an Arctic winter, setting in on November (Prince Edward) court, but not like him in latitude 50-55, I am in 37° 30 north, a little south of Algiers. I am tied here until the March and April winds and MAY frosts are over, if I live so long."<sup>1</sup>

Several letters from Randolph to Edward Booker, of Prince Edward County, who was another warm friend of his, have survived; but their interest was transitory.

Not so, however, is the last of the tributes of gratitude and affection that we shall quote Randolph as paying to Mrs. Tabb. Included in it, the reader will note, is the widow of Dr. Bathurst Randolph:

"I met Mrs. T. and poor Mrs. R. beyond Hanover Court House," he wrote to Dr. Dudley. "These are some of the very few people in this world, by whom I have been treated with kindness under every circumstance of my unprosperous life, and, when I forget them, may my God forget me."<sup>2</sup>

Nor can we omit another word in regard to Dr. Thomas Robinson, who was very intimate with Randolph when the latter resided at Bizarre, and who, after his removal to

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 228.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Dec. 18, 1821, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 228.

Petersburg, was consulted professionally by Randolph's sister when her feet were about to slip into the grave. Writing of the medical attentions which Tudor was receiving at Dr. Robinson's hands during the early sickness, to which we have previously referred, Randolph said in a letter to Nicholson:

"If it (Tudor's life) is saved, he will owe it to the unwearied exertions of Dr. Robinson, who has scarcely quitted his bedside. Endeavor to recollect this worthy man. He is an Irish exile, a man of science, a polite scholar, and a *gentleman*. I introduced him to our club (and I think you were present) at Dashiell's the winter before last. He has since been at Philadelphia, and spent the last summer at the Lazaretto, in the midst of fever and pestilence, and, although his practice has not been long, it has been very extensive."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Robinson married one of Randolph's Murray cousins, and there is a playful message to her in a letter from him to her husband:

"I had heard from Mrs. R. of Bizarre," he wrote, "of your severe attack, and be assured that it gave me very great concern. Take care of yourself, and turn miser for a few years (I am not at all afraid of the habit becoming fixed), and then you may abandon the drudgery of your profession. Tell Cousin Nancy that I wish I could give her sharp turned-up nose a little red on the top of it, and then I should have some hope of making her a skinflint. But, come what may, I indulge a hope of seeing you both yet before I die, and, of course, before you die."<sup>2</sup>

No friends of Randolph, however, were closer to him than the four whom we are yet to mention: Littleton Waller Tazewell; Dr. and Mrs. John Brockenbrough, and William Leigh.

The friendship between Tazewell and Randolph began

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, Mar. 17, 1805, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, July 9, 1813.

in boyhood and lasted throughout their lives; retaining until the very last something of its boyhood exuberance and freshness. Hugh Blair Grigsby, who knew both well, tells us that, when Randolph was speaking, Tazewell would listen with the relish of a school-boy, rubbing his hands and laughing heartily, as the orator went along.<sup>1</sup> And not the least interesting passage in Grigsby's Discourse on Tazewell is that in which he described a great plea made by Tazewell in an important case argued in the Supreme Court of the United States in 1822, which filled Randolph with such sensations of admiration that he incontinently exclaimed, as he listened, in a voice audible to those about him: "I told you so—I told you so! old Virginny never tires." Was this the origin of the celebrated phrase which caused some jealous outlander to say, that if Virginia never tired, it was, perhaps, because she never moved along fast enough to become tired?<sup>2</sup>

The most striking thing about Tazewell, however, after all, was not so much the impression of extraordinary abilities that he left upon his contemporaries by his actual achievements at the Bar and in public life, as their feeling that he possessed a reserve of force which lacked nothing but the incitements of personal ambition and a great occasion to convert Strength half leaning on his own right arm into erect and irresistible power. In the opinion of Randolph, Tazewell needed only an urgent motive for self-assertion to be second to no man in the country; indeed, in a letter to General Mercer he is said to have declared superlatively that, if such a conjuncture in the affairs of the United States were to arise as would call into full play the faculties of Tazewell, he would be the first man of the 19th century.<sup>3</sup> (a)

When Tazewell thought of resigning his seat in the United States Senate in 1826, Randolph wrote to him:

<sup>1</sup> Discourse on Tazewell, 82.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 44.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, 87.

"I can't bear the thought of your resignation. It will leave me in a hopeless and forlorn state of political widowhood. When you were in the Lower House 25 years ago, you served but one short session; a most important one indeed—Dec. 1800 to March 3, 1801—now you have served but two; indeed but one, after an interval of a quarter of a century. And shall this be all the contribution of a mind like yours to the necessities of our poor old mother, Virginia?"<sup>1</sup>

On another occasion, writing to Tazewell, during the absence of the latter from the Senate, he told him that he was supporting a motion of his, and then added: "I wish you would (could) leave me your abilities and information too when you are obliged to be absent."<sup>2</sup> Randolph also had the highest opinion of the scholarship of Tazewell. Stirred by the death of Gilmer, and the belief that Tazewell too had succumbed to a severe attack of illness, he wrote on one occasion to Dr. Brockenbrough:

"This cold, black plague has destroyed the only two men that Virginia has bred since the Revolution who had real claims to learning; the rest are all shallow pretenders; *they* were scholars, I repeat, and ripe and good ones, and the soil was better than the culture. Here the material surpassed the workmanship, tasteful and costly as it was."<sup>3</sup>

Not the least interesting of the letters from Randolph to Tazewell is a brief one in which he asked him to institute legal proceedings against St. George Tucker, for the reasons that we have already explained, and holding out to him a retainer of \$100.00 and a sum of not less than \$500.00 as a trial fee.

How deeply Randolph must have loved Tazewell we can begin to divine, when we find him coupling his name with that of Dr. Brockenbrough, who was, perhaps, after

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Feb. 14, 1826, L. W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Feb. 21, 1826, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Washington, March 4, 1826, Garland, v. 2, 268.

all, dearer to him, if intimacy is susceptible of such delicate shading, than any other friend that he ever had. Speaking of some Scotch airs which he had heard sung at a party in Washington by a Mrs. F., he wrote to Dr. Dudley as follows:

“Among others, she sang *There's nae Luck aboot the House*<sup>1</sup> very well, and *Auld Lang Syne*. When she came to the lines,

“ ‘We twa ha'e paidlet in the burn,  
Frae morning sun till dine,'

I cast my mind's eye around for such a 'trusty feese,' and could light only on T., (who, God be praised! is here), and you may judge how we meet. During the time that Dr. B. was at Walker M.'s school (from the spring of 1784, to the end of 1785, I was in Bermuda; and (although he was well acquainted with both my brothers) our acquaintance did not begin until nearly twenty years afterwards. Do you know that I am childish enough to regret this very sensibly? for, although I cannot detract from the esteem or regard in which I hold him, nor lessen the value I set upon his friendship, yet, had I known him then, I think I should enjoy *Auld Lang Syne* more, when I hear it sung, or hum it to myself, as I often do.”<sup>1</sup>

On one occasion, Randolph spoke of Dr. Brockenbrough as his most intimate friend; and the following is the account given by Dr. Brockenbrough of the origin of the friendship. It began when Randolph and he were both members of the Burr Grand Jury.

“I did not seek his acquaintance, because it had been impressed on my mind that he was a man of a wayward and irritable temper, but, as he knew that I had been a school-fellow of his brothers Richard and Theodorick, while he was in Bermuda for the benefit of his health, he very courteously made advances to me to converse about his brothers, to whom he had been much devoted, and ever afterwards I found him a

<sup>1</sup> *Letters to a Y. R.*, 241.

steady and confiding friend. He frequently passed much of his time at my house, and was the most agreeable and interesting inmate you can imagine. No little personal attention was ever lost on him, and he rendered himself peculiarly a favorite with my wife by his conversation on *belles-lettres*, in which he was so well versed; and he read (in which he excelled) to her very many of the choice passages of Milton and Shakespeare."<sup>1</sup>

It was to Dr. Brockenbrough that Randolph wrote after his defeat in 1813: "Absorbed as I may be supposed to be with my own misfortunes, I live only for my friends; they are few, but they are precious beyond all human estimation."

Randolph was frequently under Dr. Brockenbrough's roof at Richmond, and once, to his great delight, Dr. and Mrs. Brockenbrough paid him a visit at Roanoke.

Despite what Dr. Brockenbrough says about Randolph as an agreeable guest, and, despite his reluctance in the Randolph will litigation to admit that Randolph was ever positively insane, his patience with his friend must have been tried at times. In the course of the litigation just mentioned, he testified that, in 1826, Randolph passed a night in prayer at his house, keeping two candles burning in his bedroom throughout his devotions; and that, before day, Randolph ordered the servant, whom he had required to sit up with him, to take the two candles and light him down to the Eagle Tavern.<sup>2</sup> In one of his journals, under date of April 16, 1819, Randolph also made this curious entry: "Dined with Dr. Bro.—vile conduct."<sup>3</sup>

When Dr. Brockenbrough and Randolph were absent from each other, Randolph wrote to him with great frequency, and in terms to which reticence was almost a

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 1, 261.

<sup>2</sup> Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor. Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>3</sup> *Va. Hist. Soc.*



stranger; but in the preceding chapters of this book, we have quoted with such freedom from these letters as to render only a sparing reference to them in this place necessary. They not only have a distinct value for personal and social reasons, but also because of the pointed political reflections which they sometimes contain. To no one did Randolph ever state more clearly than to Dr. Brockenbrough the causes to which he referred the ever increasing disparity, in point of population and wealth, between the Northern and Southern sections of the Union:

“Your opinions,” he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough in 1829, “concerning the operation of this incubus, miscalled Government, I confess, surprise me. I have made every allowance for the dearness of slave labor, and the monstrous absurdities of our own State legislation. But I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that a community that is forbidden to buy cannot sell. ‘The whole Southern country will buy less, and make their own clothing, without making smaller crops.’ *Cui bono* this last operation, except to wear out their lands and slaves gratuitously? It is this very ‘buying less,’ that lies at the root of our mischief. If we bought more, we would sell more in proportion, and become rich by the transaction. To pursue a Chinese policy, which we did not want, this Government, by cutting us off from our best customer, England, inflicts a dead loss of \$15,000,000 this very year on one Southern state alone (Southern Carolina); as returns cannot be made in her commodities, England, in time of dearth, refuses to receive her rice. Formerly she would not eat India rice. In like manner, she will soon become independent of us for her supply of cotton. She is also planting tobacco; so that the conflagration of the factories, at which I heartily rejoice, will take from us the mite received for their consumption. Again, all the expenditure of this machine of ours, is made (Norfolk and Point Comfort excepted) north of the Chesapeake. All of the dividends of the debt of the bank are received there. No country can withstand such oppression and such a drain.

“As to W. H., I should not pay the slightest regard to any-

thing that he can say. I am well acquainted with the West Indies, and I have been told by some of the principal proprietors that with all their heavy charges for provisions, lumber, mules, &c., from which Louisiana is exempt, the sugar crop is clear of all expenses; these being defrayed by the molasses and rum. Moreover, you are to consider that the West Indies suffer under grievous commercial restrictions, and that Wilberforce and Co. have very much impaired the value of their slaves. (The same thing is at work here.) Nevertheless I was assured by the most intelligent and opulent of the 'West India Body' that the mortgages and embarrassments of Jamaica &c. grew chiefly out of the proprietors residing in England, and trusting to agents; sometimes to colonial ostentation and extravagance; but that there was scarcely an instance of a judicious and active planter personally superintending his affairs, who did not amass a fortune in a very few years.

"England was our best customer, because we were her best customers. This is the law of trade, and the basis of wealth; instead of which we have the exploded 'mercantile system,' as it was ridiculously called, revived and fastened, like the Old Man of the Sea, around our necks."<sup>1</sup>

The subject was one that haunted his thoughts so persistently that he recurred to it five days later in these words:

"Your letter of Tuesday (17) is just received. I did not 'mistake you very much,' for I did not attribute to you opinions favorable to the tariff. The causes of disparity between the East and South are to be found, among other things, in the former charging and being paid for every militia man in the field during the Revolutionary War, and for every bundle of hay and peck of oats furnished for public service; in the buying up the certificates of debt for a song, and funding them in the banks; in the bounty upon their navigation, and the monopoly of trade which the European wars gave them. If the militia services, losses, and supplies of the Carolinas had been brought

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 14, 1829, Garland, v. 2, 319.

into account, all New England would not have sold for as much as would have paid them. In regard to the West Indies, the great law of culture prevails—that the worst soils hardly reproduce the expense of cultivation. If, even in Georgia, where the cane does not yield one-half the *strength* of syrup, sugar can be made to profit, what must be the yield of the rich, fresh lands of Jamaica, St. Kitts, or Juvinau? The syrup of New Orleans, is, by the proof, 8; of the West Indies, 16.”<sup>1</sup> (a)

How deeply attached Randolph was to Dr. and Mrs. Brockenbrough many of his letters abundantly attest. On one occasion, he wrote from Dr. Brockenbrough's home to Dr. Dudley in this manner of his hosts:

“The Doctor and lady return your compliments. He is the best man in the world, and she a very superior woman. Her understanding is masculine and well improved by reading; but her misfortunes (how should they fail) have cast a sombre hue over her temper and manners.”<sup>2</sup>

As Gabriella Harvie, Mrs. Brockenbrough had first married Thomas Mann Randolph, of Tuckahoe; and the marriage had been an unhappy one.

On another occasion, he wrote to Dr. Dudley: “I am glad that my good friend, Dr. Brockenbrough, found you out. Cherish the acquaintance of that man. ‘He is not as other men are.’”<sup>3</sup> “There is a mind of a very high order; well improved, and manners that a queen might envy,” was the judgment which Randolph passed upon Mrs. Brockenbrough in one of his letters to his niece.<sup>4</sup> At the end of the same year, he also wrote to his niece:

“I am sorry that you have abstained from visiting Mrs. B., because I am persuaded your society would have been a relief to her, and I am sure that her company and conversation could

<sup>1</sup> Feb. 19, 1829, Garland, v. 2, 320.

<sup>2</sup> Richm., Mar. 20, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 157.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 3, 1811, *Id.*, 101.

<sup>4</sup> Washington, Jan. 27, 1822, Bryan MSS.

not fail to gratify you. She is a woman of a very powerful and cultivated understanding, in whose society I have found great delight."<sup>1</sup>

Some four years later, in another letter to his niece, he spoke of the pair in these touching words:

"You say that Dr. and Mrs. Brockenbrough love me and speak of me continually. Indeed, I believe they do, and that conviction is one of the treasures of my heart. For more than 20 years, I have been to them an object of uniform kindness and attention, and their friendship has, during that long and unprosperous period of my life, constituted its chief solace. They have never been wanting to rejoice in my prosperity and mourn in my adversity. The more and the longer you know them, the deeper will be your admiration and esteem. To them I look for the greater share of what little comfort may be left in the dregs of the cup of life. Of one thing I never can be deprived—the gratification of numbering them among those who have honored me with a place in their regard."<sup>2</sup>

The friendship continued as long as Randolph lasted. "Took leave of my friends Dr. and Mrs. Brockenbrough. Felt more like leaving home than returning to it," was an entry made by him in one of his journals under date of Feb. 18, 1830.<sup>3</sup> And, perhaps, Dr. Brockenbrough was the only person in the world to whom Randolph, even in his shattered condition of body and mind, could have written these words, wrung from his proud nature by the pitiable state in which he found himself in the late summer or early fall, of 1832, when the cup of existence had nothing for him but its blackest and bitterest dregs:

"After I wrote to you on Sunday night, the next day I had a most violent fit of hysteria. I was so moved by the ingratitude of my servants and my destitute and forlorn condition that I

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 29, 1822, *Id.*

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Feb. 2, 1827, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> *Va. Hist. Soc.*

'lifted up my voice and wept'; wept most bitterly. Yet I am now inclined to think that I did the poor creatures some injustice by ascribing to ingratitude what was the insensibility of their condition in life. But everybody, you only excepted, abandons me in my misery.''<sup>1</sup>

The long friendship between Randolph and Wm. Leigh began as Mrs. Malaprop thought marriage should begin—with a little aversion; for, in the Randolph will litigation, Leigh testified that he had been told by Beverley Tucker that, in the first instance, Randolph had taken a dislike to him.<sup>2</sup> The dislike was subsequently converted into feelings of the deepest esteem and the warmest affection. After the year 1822, Leigh looked after Randolph's business affairs, when he was not at home; saw him two or three times a month, when he was at home, and conversed with him, when he met him, in the most unreserved and confidential manner. We quote Leigh's own words in the Randolph will litigation.<sup>3</sup> In one of his letters to his niece, Randolph spoke of Leigh as his *Fidus Achates*,<sup>4</sup> and, while he was disposed to charge to Leigh's professional preoccupations the demoralized condition, in which he found his plantation, as he thought, on his return from Russia, his feelings about Leigh never underwent the slightest change. At one time, he conducted a plantation on the Dan River, purchased by Leigh, jointly with him; contributing to its operation a certain number of negroes, draft animals, and implements. This arrangement Randolph evidently entered into for the purpose of assisting Leigh, who did not have the hands with which to work the plantation himself. Many years later, he asked Leigh how the account between them stood, and was told

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 349.

<sup>2</sup> Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor., Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Washington, Jan. 30, 1822, Bryan MSS.

by him that there was a balance in favor of Leigh of \$2,807.44; but that Randolph had been given no credit for the hire of the negroes. Randolph replied that it did not amount to more than the balance against him. Leigh told him that he thought that it did, though he could not say how much; whereupon Randolph proposed that they should execute mutual releases; which was done, Randolph himself preparing with his own hand the release by which he discharged Leigh.<sup>1</sup>

It is not often that one friend has occasion to write more painful words about another than these which Leigh wrote to John Randolph Clay a few months after Randolph's death:

“For some time after this event, I could not muster up resolution enough to write or do anything. Hence my long silence. We had been so long such close friends, and I was so strongly attached to him that I could not part with him without the deepest grief. And yet my judgment told me that death was to him a relief from perpetual torture of both body and mind. After his return from the Russian Mission, he was not the same man. For months after he reached home, he did not pass one quiet hour, and his active mind, excited to madness, was employed in seeking matter to complain of. He quarrelled with his neighbors and slaves, and abused his best friends. I, who, as you know, had given up too much of my time to serve him, and had devoted myself to him, so as to draw upon me the censure of the world, escaped not. But I knew his situation, and I was, without the least feeling of anger, overwhelmed with sorrow at witnessing the overthrow of his powerful understanding and his sufferings. Even after he had recovered from the violence of his madness, he was not the man he had been before his departure for Russia. His feelings were perverted, and he seemed to have lost in a great degree his attachment for his old friends—the effect, doubtless, of derangement. In addition to this, he was tortured by disease

<sup>1</sup> Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor. Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

of body. This being his situation, no friend ought to have desired for him protracted life. But my feelings were at war with my judgment, and for sometime I could think of nothing but his death."<sup>1</sup>

Such was Randolph in his family and social relations. When, in addition to the facts which we have set forth above, the reader is told that no less than five persons—Randolph's brother Henry, Joseph Bryan, Thomas Spalding, of Georgia, Joseph Clay, Sir Grey Skipwith, and Charles Sterrett Ridgely, are known to have named sons after him, because of the love that they bore him, it is difficult to find words keen and indignant enough to fitly condemn the reckless brutality which led Henry Adams to say that Randolph belonged "to an order of animated beings still nearer than the Indians to the jealous predacious instincts of dawning intelligence."<sup>2</sup>

To Randolph religion brought only a precarious degree of happiness; though it cannot be doubted that, except during the period of his avowed infidelity in early life, he was subject to truly religious emotions, when in a normal state of mind and heart.

In his childhood, he received the religious instruction of a pious mother, and, in his later years, he took pride in the fact that he was born and baptized in the Church of England.<sup>3</sup> In the prayer book, which he gave to his nephew, John St. George Randolph, on August 8, 1818, he wrote these words:

"Your parents were born members of the Church of England. All your forefathers have been of that persuasion. You can have no good cause to desert it. Keep this book; and consider it, as next to the Bible (from which, indeed, it is for the most part extracted) entitled to your reverence. If any charge you

<sup>1</sup> Halifax Co., Aug. 10, 1833, Clay MSS. Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> *John Randolph*, 256.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 2, 103.



with formality, ask them if there be more form in reading prose than in singing verse, given out too by another. This all sects but the Quakers do. Ask them to read our Liturgy, more especially the General Confession, the Te Deum, and, above all, the Litany, if they can, with unmelted hearts or uncurdled blood. He that refuses to go along with a devout reader of this service may suspect himself of a want of 'vital religion.' If form be again objected, and the coldness of our service, tell them the coldness is not in the book but in the bosoms of men. Here is something which out of the Bible we shall seek elsewhere in vain, to suit every rank and condition of life. I am rarely affected by extempore prayer, often in pain for the person praying, but, in whatever mood I find [myself], my feelings, whether of penitence or thanksgiving, respond to the supplications and prayers of our Venerable Church."<sup>1</sup>

Influenced by the general religious reaction of the time, and such scoffers as Voltaire, Diderot and D'Alembert, Randolph, in his earlier years, forgot the precepts of his mother and became an infidel. This condition of mind, however, curiously enough had been preceded by a brief period, during which he imagined that he might become a Mohammedan.

"Very early in life," he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough, "I imbibed an absurd prejudice in favor of Mohammedanism and its votaries. The Crescent had a talismanic effect on my imagination, and I rejoiced in all its triumphs over the Cross (which I despised), as I mourned over its defeats; and Mahomet II. himself did not more exult than I did, when the Crescent was planted on the dome of St. Sophia, and the Cathedral of the Constantines converted into a Turkish mosque."<sup>2</sup>

This vagary, as fantastic as the conversion of Lord George Gordon to Judaism, soon passed away.

Side by side with it, should be read the letter from Randolph to Dr. Brockenbrough, in which he narrated

<sup>1</sup> *Sou. Churchman*, Feb. 19, 1880.

<sup>2</sup> Sept. 25, 1818, *Garland*, v. 2, 102.



the process by which he had been reconverted from his parlor Mohammedanism and subsequent state of religious skepticism to the faith in which he had been born and nurtured, as a child.

“I am sorry that Quashee should intrude upon you unreasonably. The old man, I suppose, knows the pleasure I take in your letters, and, therefore, feels anxious to procure his master the gratification. I cannot, however, express sorrow—for I do not feel it—at the impression which you tell me my last letter made upon you. May it lead to the same happy consequences that I have experienced—which I now feel—in that sunshine of the heart, which the peace of God, that passeth all understanding, alone can bestow!

“Your imputing such sentiments to a heated imagination does not surprise me, who have been bred in the school of Hobbes and Bayle, and Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke, and Hume and Voltaire and Gibbon; who have cultivated the skeptical philosophy from my vain-glorious boyhood—I might almost say childhood—and who have felt all that unutterable disgust which hypocrisy, and cant, and fanaticism never fail to excite in men of education and refinement, superadded to our natural repugnance to Christianity. I am not, even now, insensible to this impression; but, as the excesses of her friends (real or pretended) can never alienate the votary of liberty from a free form of government, and enlist him under the banners of despotism, so neither can the cant of fanaticism, or hypocrisy, or of both (for so far from being incompatible, they are generally found united in the same character—may God in his mercy preserve and defend us from both) disgust the pious with true religion.

“Mine has been no sudden change of opinion. I can refer to a record, showing, on my part, a desire of more than nine years’ standing, to partake of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper; although, for two and twenty years preceding, my feet had never crossed the threshold of the house of prayer. This desire I was restrained from indulging by the fear of eating and drinking unrighteously. And, although that fear hath been cast out by perfect love, I have never yet gone to the altar;

neither have I been present at the performance of divine service, unless indeed I may so call my reading the liturgy of our church and some chapters of the Bible to my poor negroes on Sundays. Such passages as I think require it, and which I feel competent to explain, I comment upon—enforcing as far as possible, and dwelling upon, those texts especially that enjoin the indispensable accompaniment of a good life as the touchstone of the true faith. The Sermon from the Mount, and the Evangelists generally; the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, chap. vi; the General Epistle of James, and the first Epistle of John; these are my chief texts.

“The consummation of my *conversion*—I use the word in its strictest sense—is owing to a variety of causes, but chiefly to the conviction, unwillingly forced upon me, that the very few friends, which an unprosperous life (the fruit of an ungovernable temper) had left me, were daily losing their hold upon me, in a firmer grasp of ambition, avarice, or sensuality. I am not sure that, to complete the anti-climax, avarice should not have been last; for although, in some of its effects, debauchery be more disgusting than avarice, yet, as it regards the unhappy victim, this last is more to be dreaded. Dissipation, as well as power or prosperity, hardens the heart; but avarice deadens it to every feeling but the thirst for riches. Avarice alone could have produced the slave-trade; avarice alone can drive, as it does drive, this infernal traffic, and the wretched victims of it, like so many post-horses, whipped to death in a mail-coach. Ambition has its reward in the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war; but where are the trophies of avarice?—the handcuff, the manacle, and the blood-stained cowhide? What man is worse received in society for being a hard master? Every day brings to light some H—e or H—ns in our own boasted land of liberty! Who denies the hand of a sister or daughter to such monsters? Nay, they have even appeared in ‘the abused shape of the vilest of women.’ I say nothing of India, or Amboyna, or Cortez, or Pizarro.

“When I was last in your town, I was inexpressibly shocked (and perhaps I am partly indebted to the circumstance for accelerating my emancipation) to hear, on the threshold of the temple of the least erect of all the spirits that fell from heaven,

these words spoken by a man second to none in this nation in learning or abilities; one, too, whom I had, not long before, seen at the table of our Lord and Saviour: 'I do not want the Holy Ghost (I shudder while I write), or any other spirit in me.' If these doctrines are true (St. Paul's), there was no need for Wesley and Whitefield to have separated from the church. The Methodists are right, and the church wrong. I want to see the old church, &c. &c.: that is, such as this diocese was under Bishop *Terrick*, when wine-bibbing and buck-parsons were sent out to preach 'a dry clatter of morality,' and not the word of God, for 16,000 lbs. of tobacco. When I speak of morality, it is not as condemning it; religion includes it, but much more. Day is now breaking, and I shall extinguish my candles, which are better than no light; or, if I do not, in the presence of the powerful King of Day they will be noticed only by the dirt and ill savor that betray all human contrivances; the taint of humanity. Morality is to the Gospel not even as a farthing rushlight to the blessed sun."<sup>1</sup>

Of the perplexities, the anxieties, and the misgivings, which accompanied the transition mentioned in this letter, we need not speak in detail. The transition itself was doubtless initiated, in no little measure, by the general religious reawakening of which Dr. John H. Rice spoke in one of his letters to the Rev. Archibald Alexander:

"You remember," he said, "that in Virginia there was a class of persons who never went to church at all. They thought it beneath them. That class is diminishing in numbers pretty rapidly, and, now and then, persons of this description are entering into the church. Mrs. Judith Randolph, of Bizarre, lately made a profession of religion. I have been much in her company since, and I think her among the most truly pious in our country. John Randolph attended the sacrament when his sister joined with us, and seemed to be much impressed. He invited Mr. Hoge home with him and conversed much upon religion. Mr. Hoge is fully persuaded that he is, as it is

<sup>1</sup> Sept. 25, 1818, *Garland*, v. 2, 100.

expressed here, an *exercised man*. Wm. B. Giles regularly attends our missionaries who preach in Amelia. Mr. Speece preached in his neighborhood not long ago. He was present and remarkably attentive. In the evening, he repeated to a lady, who could not go to church, Mr. Speece's sermon almost *verbatim*; adding, when he was done, that was the best sermon he had ever heard or read. Joseph Eggleston, formerly member of Congress, entertains our missionaries at his house with the utmost cordiality. The wife of John W. Eppes is said to be under very serious religious impressions. There were at the last Cumberland sacrament from 8 to 10 of the Randolph connections at the table of the Lord."<sup>1</sup>

So John Randolph was but one of the many straws caught up and floated off into the bosom of the Church by one of those rising tides of Evangelical Presbyterianism, which were so common in this region. From being a merely exercised hearer, he, after experiencing all the vicissitudes of doubt, fear, and love which attended the full reconciliation of a human soul to the purposes of God in his day, and, after receiving word after word of explanation, assurance, and hope from Key, William Meade, and Dr. Hoge, at last found that he no longer shrank from the altar which he had written to Key that he would have given all that he was worth to be able to approach, and yet could not;<sup>2</sup> and broke out into this triumphant pæan of confidence and joy:

"Congratulate me Frank—wish me joy you need not—give it you cannot—I am at last reconciled to my God and have assurance of his pardon through faith in Christ, against which the very gates of Hell cannot prevail. Fear hath been driven out by perfect love. I *now know* that *you know* how I feel; and, within a month, for the first time, I understand your feelings and character and that of every *real* Christian. Love to Mrs. Key and your brood. I am not now afraid of being

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of the Rev. Jno. H. Rice*, by Maxwell, 55.

<sup>2</sup> Garland, v. 2, 66.

'righteous overmuch' or of 'methodistical notions.' Thine in truth, J. R. of R. Let Meade know the glad tidings, and let him, if he has kept it, read and preserve my letter to him from Richmond years ago."<sup>1</sup>

Looking back a few weeks later over the long pathway, strewn with pitfalls, and enveloped in obscurity, which he had trod, Randolph wrote of his conversion to Wm. Meade: "I can compare it to nothing so well as the dawning sun after a dark, tempestuous night."<sup>2</sup>

It would take us too far afield to quote very freely from the numerous letters written by Randolph on such topics. Moreover, religious as the world still is, the morbid psychology, revealed by these letters, is more or less obsolete. On the principle, however, of *ex pede Herculem* we will bring two more of them to the attention of the reader. Both were written to Dr. Brockenbrough.

(I)

"It was to me a subject of deep regret that I was obliged to leave town before Mr. Meade's arrival. I promised myself much comfort and improvement from his conversation. My dear sir, there is, or there is not, another and a better world. If there is, as we all believe, what is it but madness to be absorbed in the cares of a clay-built hovel, held at will, unmindful of the rich inheritance of an imperishable palace, of which we are immortal heirs? We acknowledge these things with our lips, but not with our hearts; we lack faith.

"We would serve God; provided we may serve Mammon at the same time. For my part, could I be brought to believe that this life must be the end of my being, I should be disposed to get rid of it as an incumbrance. If what is to come, be anything like what is passed, it would be wise to abandon the hulk to the underwriters, the worms. I am more and more convinced that, with a few exceptions, this world of ours is a vast mad-house. The only men I ever knew well, ever

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 7. 1818, Garland, v. 2, 99,

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Dec. 21, 1818, Misc. Randolph Letters, Libr. Cong.

approached closely, whom I did not discover to be unhappy, are sincere believers of the Gospel, and conform their lives, as far as the nature of man can permit, to its precepts. There are only *three* of them. [Meade, Hoge, Key?] And yet, Ambition, and Avarice, and Pleasure, as it is called, have their temples crowded with votaries, whose own experience has proved to them the insufficiency and emptiness of their pursuits, and who obstinately turn away from the only waters that can slake their dying thirst and heal their diseases.

“One word on the subject of your own state of mind. I am well acquainted with it—too well. Like you, I have not reached that lively faith which some more favored persons enjoy. But I am persuaded that it can and will be attained by all who are conscious of the depravity of our nature, of their own manifold departures from the laws of God, and sins against their own conscience; and who are sincerely desirous to accept of pardon on the terms held out in the Gospel. Without puzzling ourselves, therefore, with subtle disquisitions, let us ask, are we conscious of the necessity of pardon? are we willing to submit to the terms offered to us—to consider Christianity as a scheme imperfectly understood, planned by Infinite Wisdom, and canvassed by finite comprehensions—to ask of our Heavenly Father that faith and that strength which by our own unassisted efforts we can never attain? To me it would be a stronger objection to Christianity, did it contain nothing which baffled my comprehension, than its most difficult doctrines. What professor ever delivered a lecture that his scholars were not at a loss to comprehend some parts of it? But that is no objection to the doctrine. But the teacher here is God! I may deceive myself, but I hope that I have made some progress; so small indeed that I may be ashamed of it, in this necessary work, even since I saw you. I am no disciple of Calvin or Wesley, but I feel the necessity of a changed nature; of a new life; of an altered heart. I feel my stubborn and rebellious nature to be softened, and that it is essential to my comfort here, as well as to my future welfare, to cultivate and cherish feelings of good will towards all mankind; to strive against envy, malice, and all uncharitableness. I think I have succeeded in forgiving all my enemies. There

is not a human being that I would hurt, if it were in my power; not even Bonaparte."<sup>1</sup>

## (2)

"As well as very bad implements and worse eyes will permit me to do it by candlelight, I will endeavor to make some return to your kind letter, which I received, not by Quashee, but the mail. I also got a short note by him, for which I thank you. . . . And now, my dear friend, one word in your ear—in the porches of thine ear. With Archimedes, I may cry Eureka. Why, what have you found—the philosopher's stone? No—something better than that. Gyges' ring? No. A substitute for bank paper? No. The *elixir vitæ*, then? It is; but it is the elixir of eternal life. It is that peace of God which passeth all understanding, and which is no more to be conceived of by the material heart than poor St. George can be made to feel and taste the difference between the Italian and German music. It is a miracle, of which the person, upon whom it is wrought, alone is conscious—as he is conscious of any other feeling—*e.g.* whether the friendship he professes for A or B be a real sentiment of his heart, or simulated to serve a turn.

"God, my dear friend, hath visited me in my desolation; in the hours of darkness, of sickness, and of sorrow: of that worst of all sickness, sickness of the heart, for which neither wealth nor power can find or afford a cure. May you, my dear friend, find it, where alone it is to be found! in the sacred volume—in the word of God, whose power surpasseth all that human imagination (unassisted by grace) can conceive. I am now; for the first time in my life, supplied with a motive of action that never can mislead me—the love of God and my neighbor—because I love God. All other motives I feel, by my own experience, in my own person, as well as in that of numerous 'friends' (so called), to be utterly worthless. God hath at last given me courage to confess him before men. Once I hated mankind—bitterly hated them—but loved (like that wretched man, Swift) 'John or Thomas.' Now, my regard for individuals is not lessened, but my love for the race exalted almost to a level with that of my *friends*—I am obliged to use

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, July 4, 1815, Garland, v. 2, 68.



the word. I pretend to no sudden conversion, or new or great lights. I have stubbornly held out, for more than a Trojan siege, against the goodness and mercy of my creator. Yes—Troy town did not so long and so obstinately resist the confederated Greeks. But what is the wrath of the swift-footed Achilles to the wrath of God? and what his speed to the vengeance of heaven? and what are these even to the love of Jesus Christ, thou Son of David? I have often asked, but it was without sufficient humility; or, perhaps, like the Canaanitish woman, God saw fit to try me. I sought, but not with sufficient diligence—at least, deserted in my utmost need, (not indeed like Darius, great and good—for I could *command* service, such as we often pay to God—lip service and eye service), desolate and abandoned by all that had given me reason to think they had any respect and affection for me, I knocked with all my might. I asked for the crumbs that otherwise might be swept out to the dogs, and there was opened to me the full and abundant treasury of his grace. When this happened, I cannot tell. It has broken upon me like the dawn I see every morning, insensibly changing darkness into light. My slavish fears of punishment, which I always knew to be sinful, but would not put off, are converted into an humble hope of a seat, even if it be the lowest, in the courts of God. Yes, at last I am happy—as happy as man can be. Should it please God to continue his favor to me, you will see it—not only on my lips, but in my life. Should he withdraw it, as assuredly he will, unless with his assistance I humbly endeavor by prayer and self-denial, and *doing* of his word as well as hearing it, to obtain its continuance, mine will only be the deeper damnation. Of this danger I am sensible, but not afraid. I mean slavishly afraid. He that hath quenched the smoking flax, who has snatched me as a brand from the burning, will not, I humbly yet firmly trust, cast me back into the furnace. I now know the meaning of words that before I repeated, but did not comprehend. I am no Burley of Balfour, but I have been, as I thought, on the very verge and brink of his disease; but I prayed to God to save me, and not to suffer me to fall a prey to the arts and wiles of Satan, at the very moment I was seeking his reconciliation.



"I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and soberness. I have thrown myself, reeking with sin, on the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ his blessed Son and, our (yes, my friend, *our*) precious Redeemer; and I have assurance as strong as that I now owe nothing to your Bank, that the debt is paid; and now I love God, and with reason. I once hated him, and with reason too, for I knew not Christ. The only cause why I should love God is his goodness and mercy to me *through Christ*. But for this, the lion and the sea-serpent would not be more appalling to my imagination than a being of tremendous and definite power, who made me what I am—who wanted either the will or the ability to prevent the existence of evil, and punishes what is inevitable. This is not a God, but a Devil, and all unbelievers in God tremble and believe in this Devil that they worship—such worship as it is, in his place. I have been looking over some of my marginal pencilled notes on Gibbon, and rubbing them out. I had thought to burn the book, but the Quarterly Review and Professor Porson have furnished the antidote to his poison, whether in the shape of infidelity or obscenity. See Review of Gibbon's Posthumous works.

"'Chains are the portion of revolted man,  
Stripes and a dungeon; and his body serves  
The triple purpose. In that sickly, foul,  
Opprobrious residence he finds them all.'

COWPER'S *Task*.

God hath called me to come out from among them—the worshippers of Mammon or of 'Moloch homicide,' of 'Chemos, the obscene dread of Moab's son,' 'Peor, his other name':

"'Lust hard by Hate,'

and I will come so help me God!

"Is it madness to prefer your new house in fee simple, to a clay cottage, of which I am a tenant at will, and may be turned out at a moment's warning, and even without it; and out of which I *know* I must be turned in a few years certainly?

"It is now midnight. May God watch over our sleep—over

our helpless, naked condition, and protect us as well from the insect that carries death in its sting, as from the more feared but not so obvious dangers with which life is beset; and, if he should come this night (as come he will) like a thief, may we be ready to stand in his presence and plead not our merits, but his stripes, by whom we are made whole. J. R. of R.

"P.S. I was not aware of the length to which my sermon would extend. Let me entreat you again to read Milton and Cowper. They prepared me for the 'Samson' (as Rush would say) among the medicines for the soul."<sup>1</sup>

One of the effects of the full maturity of Randolph's spiritual re-birth was to chill his interest in politics. Immediately after his election to Congress in 1815, he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough:

"I got here today. Tomorrow we are to begin our inquisition (a contested election). This business does not suit me at all. My thoughts are running in a far different channel. I never feel so free from uneasiness as when I am reading the Testament, or hearing some able preacher. This great concern presses me by day and by night, almost to the engrossing of my thoughts. It is first in my mind when I awake, and the last when I go to sleep. I think it becomes daily more clear to me. All other things are as nothing when put in comparison with it. You have had a great comfort in the presence of Mr. Meade. I too, am not without some consolation; for I have received a letter from Frank Key that I would not exchange for the largest bundle of bank notes that you ever signed."<sup>2</sup>

Another effect of religion upon Randolph's nature was to fill him with a sense of humility, which he had never before known: "If I could have my way," he said to Key in one of his letters, "I would retire to some retreat far from the strife of the world and pass the remnant of my days in meditation and prayer; and yet this would be a

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Aug. 25, 1818, *So. Lit. Mess.*, v. 2, 8; July, 1836, pp. 461, 462.

<sup>2</sup> Buckingham C. H., May 29, 1815; *Garland*, v. 2., 65.

life of ignoble security."¹ In the same letter, he told Key that there were two ways only, in his opinion, in which he might be serviceable to mankind; one was in teaching children, and that he had some thoughts of establishing a school.

"Then again," he added, "it comes into my head that I am borne away by a transient enthusiasm, or that I may be reduced to the condition of some unhappy fanatics who mistake the perversion of their intellects for the conversion of their hearts. Pray for me."

After this change took place in Randolph, it was observed that, when Dr. Hoge dined with him at Roanoke, he always seated himself at the foot of his table, and placed Dr. Hoge at its head; and here, as well as elsewhere, we might mention the fact that for this celebrated divine he felt the highest degree of admiration.

"I consider Dr. Hoge," he once said, "as the ablest and most interesting speaker that I ever heard in the pulpit or out of it; and the most perfect pattern of a Christian teacher that I ever saw. His life affords an example of the great truths of the doctrine that he dispenses to his flock; and, if he has a fault, 'which being mortal I suppose he cannot be free from,' I have never heard it pointed out."²

In speaking of Randolph at divine service in Westminster Abbey in 1822, Harvey says:

"Most audibly and solemnly did Randolph repeat the responses. His figure, his voice, his solemnity of manner were so striking the persons present eyed him with no small curiosity, and I caught even the Reverend Clergyman's gaze more than once fixed upon him; but he noticed them not, so completely were his feelings enlisted in the simple services of the altar."³

¹ May 31, 1815, *Id.*, 66.

² Garland, v. 2, 64.

³ *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 29.

We also learn from Harvey that, when Randolph was crossing the Atlantic with him in 1822, he read aloud an extract from the Bible and a part of the Episcopal service each Sunday, except when he was prevented by bad weather or ill-health, once delivered an extemporaneous prayer, and on Good Friday composed some religious observations suitable to the day, which were expressed in the purest English.<sup>1</sup>

But most grateful after all is the sober testimony rendered by Wm. Leigh in the Randolph will litigation, to the real change of heart which religious conversion produced in Randolph.

Another result was a quickened sensitiveness on his part to his character as a slave-holder, which led him to accumulate a sum of money for the purpose of defraying the expense of emancipating his slaves, and establishing them in life. This fund was lost by the failure of Tompkins and Murray in 1819.<sup>2</sup>

Of course, as time elapsed, and Randolph's spiritual convulsion abated, leaving him fully subject to all his natural impulses and all the excitement of public life, he became involved occasionally in inconsistencies between religious profession and practice, which were by no means edifying to a straight-laced Christian. In his observations on John Randolph's religious character, it is quite obvious that Bishop Meade, whom Randolph in the meridian of his religious enthusiasm, had sometimes gone all the way from Washington to Christ Church, at Alexandria, to hear preach,<sup>3</sup> had grave doubts as to whether Randolph could be safely held up as an example of the full efficacy of Grace.<sup>4</sup> More than one amusing story is told of the dexterous shifts to which Randolph, between the ready

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 346.

<sup>2</sup> J. R. to F. S. Key, May 3, 1819, Garland, v. 2, 106.

<sup>3</sup> *Old Churches, etc.*, by Meade (Phil., 1910), v. 1, 33.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* (note).

spur of his quick temper and his desire to maintain a reputation for religious conformity, was driven, when he found it necessary to convince a Southside Virginia pietist that the word "damn" was nothing more than an equivalent for the word "condemn." The incompatibility between the hair-triggered temper and religious decorum was especially pronounced, it is hardly necessary to say, during seasons of mental disturbance. An illustration of this fact, at once sad and amusing, is recalled in the *Reminiscences of John Randolph* by the Rev. R. L. Dabney, to which we have already referred.

"It is well known that after Mr. Randolph's religious impression began, he was zealous for the Christian instruction of his negroes. There was a large room near his cottage, where he assembled them for worship, and where he often read the Scriptures to them and instructed them himself. After his health declined, he made a contract with some respectable Christian minister to give his people an afternoon service. At one time, he had such an engagement with the Rev. Abner Clopton, an excellent Baptist divine of Charlotte County. Mr. Carrington's statement to me was that Mr. Clopton himself related the following incident. He went to Roanoke from his morning appointment near Scuffletown, and dined with Mr. Randolph, as he was accustomed on the days of his appointment. After dinner, Mr. Randolph accompanied him to the log chapel, and they found it full of negroes. Mr. Clopton said that he behaved with all the seriousness of a Presbyterian elder. Knowing the weakness of the negroes for a religion more emotional than sanctifying, he aimed his sermon strongly against the Antinomian abuse of the gospel. When the services were about to end, Mr. Randolph rose and spoke in substance thus: Rev. Sir, I crave your permission to add my poor word of confirmation to the excellent instruction you have given these people. My excuse must be my great solicitude for the welfare of the souls of these dependents of mine. Mr. Clopton told him that certainly he should feel at liberty to instruct his servants, for nobody had a better

right to do it than the master. Mr. Randolph then arose, and began with great point, and in most excellent scriptural language, to enforce the doctrine that the faith which did not produce good works could not justify. From being solemn and emphatic, he grew excited and then sarcastic. He described the type of religion too current among negroes, which made them sing and bow and shout and weep in their meetings, but which failed to restrain them from gross immoralities. This spurious fanaticism he scathed with the keenest sarcasm. At last, he evidently lost control of himself; singling out a young buck negro on the third bench from the front, who had been very emphatic in his *amens* and such like manifestations of piety, he shook his long forefinger at him, and said: 'Here is this fellow Phil. In the meeting on Sunday, he is the foremost man to sing and shout and get happy, and, on Sunday night, he is the first man to steal his master's shoats—the damned rascal!' Mr. Clopton laid his hand on his arm in protest, saying: 'Mr. Randolph, Mr. Randolph!' He instantly stopped in the most deferential manner, and asked Mr. Clopton what correction he had to offer. He replied: 'He thought it his duty to protest against the terms which Mr. Randolph was employing.' 'What terms?' 'Why those in which you have just addressed that man Phil. It can never be proper in teaching God's truth to use any profanity, seeing God has forbidden it.' Randolph replied: 'Sir, you both astonish and mortify me. I had hoped that, if my credit as a Christian was so poor (and I know that I am but a sorry Christian) as not to save me from the imputation of profanity, my credit, as a gentleman, should have done so. I had flattered myself that I should be judged incapable of insulting a minister of our holy religion, while my own guest, by using profanity in his presence.' This view of the matter rather provoked Mr. Clopton, and he insisted that the terms, in which he had rebuked the negro, were not only cruelly severe but distinctly profane, and that in the midst of a religious service. 'What then did I say to him that was so bad?' 'Why, Sir, you called him in expressed words 'a damned rascal!' 'And you misunderstood that as an intentional profanity? You fill me with equal surprise and mortification. I considered

myself as only stating a theological truth in terms of faithful plainness. Do not the sacred Scriptures say that thieves are liable to the condemnation of the Divine Judge? And is not this just the meaning of the term which you say I used?' Mr. Clopton said this turn quite took his breath away, and he thought it best not to continue the discussion."<sup>1</sup>

But all the same, it is undoubtedly true that the religious impressions stamped on Randolph's mind in childhood, and afterwards renewed by the throes, through which he passed between 1810 and 1819, were never wholly effaced. Indeed, they never seemed so natural or genuine as during those rare moments in his latter years when his soul, like that of Saul, freed from the evil spirit that persecuted him, was at peace.

"Mr. Pinkney, whom I heard and saw a day or two ago in the pride of life," he wrote to his niece, "is now an almost insensible and helpless corpse. Perhaps our souls may be demanded this night. May we be able to say on that (as on every other) occasion, awful as it is, 'Thy will be done.'"<sup>2</sup>

In the same year he wrote to his niece:

"God bless you and all that are dear to you, and may the chastening of that heavenly Father, who scourgeth every son, that he receiveth, purify our hearts that we may become dwellers in the mansions prepared for them that believe in his most blessed son, our Precious Redeemer, and earnestly implore His aid to do His will on earth; as it is in heaven. Which may He in His infinite good and mercy grant for Jesus Christ sake, Amen. Your uncle and friend, JOHN RANDOLPH."<sup>3</sup>

Some five years later, he wrote to the same beloved object of his affections: "That you think of me before committing yourself to rest is a grateful circumstance.

<sup>1</sup> *Union Seminary Magazine*, v. 6, 1894-95, 14-21.

<sup>2</sup> Feb. 19, 1822, Bryan MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Jan. 11, 1822, Bryan MSS.

Remember me in your prayers."<sup>1</sup> These letters, be it remembered, were written to a young girl on whom he was simply lavishing the unaffected language of his spontaneous thoughts and feelings.

Some of the remarkable entries made by Randolph in one of his journals, during the period in 1818, when his religious mania was at its height, are not without interest. One, under date of Aug. 26, is: "Tempted and did not fall. Praised be His holy name."<sup>2</sup> Another, under date of Aug. 27: "Tempted again, and was falling, but arrested by the hand of God. Repent and am ashamed."<sup>3</sup> A month later, he fell all the way to the ground, because, under date of Sept. 27, he enters these words: "Sin, repent."<sup>4</sup> "Oh! night of bliss," "This morning God gives me leave to look over my old papers," are other jottings.

These entries were made when the stream of his religious thoughts had not worked itself free from its turbid elements. A few years later, when it had deposited its sediment, and was no longer chafed by the rocks and shoals of spiritual anxieties and fears, it was a very different thing. "He was habitual in his reverential regard for the divinity of our religion," we are told by Benton, "and one of his beautiful expressions was that 'if woman had lost us paradise, she had gained us heaven.'"<sup>5</sup> And truly, like a song in the night, must have been the rhapsody which fell from his lips in the presence of Benton during the last months of his life, when, between mental distractions, bodily disease, and the lenitives, to which he resorted to assuage intolerable distress, he was as deserving of the pity of God as any object upon which it has ever been bestowed:

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Feb. 2, 1827, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Libr. Cong.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*      <sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *30 Years' View*, 475.



"The last time I saw him (in that last visit to Washington after his return from the Russian Mission, and when he was in full view of death)," Benton says, "I heard him read the chapter in the Revelations (of the opening of the seals) with such power and beauty of voice and delivery, and such depth of pathos that I felt as if I had never heard the chapter read before. When he had got to the end of the opening of the sixth seal, he stopped the reading, laid the book (open at the place) on his breast, as he lay on his bed, and began a discourse upon the beauty and sublimity of the Scriptural writings, compared to which he considered all human compositions vain and empty. Going over the images, presented by the opening of the seals, he averred that their divinity was in their sublimity, that no human power could take the same images and inspire the same awe, and terror, and sink ourselves into such nothingness in the presence of the 'wrath of the Lamb,' that he wanted no proof of their divine origin but the sublime feelings which they inspired."<sup>1</sup>

"It would have been as easy for a mole to have written Sir Isaac Newton's *Treatise on Optics*," he declared on another occasion, "as for uninspired men to have written the Bible."<sup>2</sup>

It is a just remark of Parton that Randolph's political influence was enhanced by his high social position<sup>3</sup>; and another thing that helped to bring his figure out in high relief was the fact that he was the owner of a large plantation, and many hundreds of negroes. In other words, he belonged to a class of which Randolph himself said, with some truth, that it was as much a nobility as if it had been composed of Dukes, Earls, or Barons.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to his other lands, Randolph was also the owner for a time of a farm of 400 acres, called "the Michaux place," in Cumberland County, Va., which he sold,

<sup>1</sup> *30 Years' View*, 475.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 87.

<sup>3</sup> *Famous Americans*, 198.

<sup>4</sup> J. R. to —, Washington, May 6, 1826.

in 1816, to Thomas A. Morton.<sup>1</sup> After his death his estate was also compelled to pay about \$14,000 for a tract in Chesterfield County which he had contracted to buy from Benjamin Moody.<sup>2</sup> And his correspondence with Garnett shows that he was eager at one time to acquire an estate between the James and Rappahannock called Port Tobago.<sup>3</sup>

Roanoke was divided into three shifts, known as the Ferry Quarter, the Middle Quarter, and the Lower Quarter; and the two dwellings, in which Randolph resided, were situated on the Middle Quarter. To the Staunton River, which bounded Roanoke on the South, there is a happy allusion in one of his letters to Josiah Quincy:

"It rises," he said, "beyond the Blue Ridge, indeed in the Alleghany Mountains; passes through the counties of Montgomery and Botetourt under its right name; issues from the mountains *incog.*, under the appellation of Staunton; here receives the Little Roanoke; and, on its junction with the Dan, about 30 miles below, resumes its true name, which it retains during the remainder of its course to the Sound."<sup>4</sup>

At this day it is difficult to realize how remote and secluded Roanoke was. Richmond, nearly a hundred miles off, was the nearest town to it of any considerable importance, except Petersburg, a place of only 8,322 inhabitants even in 1830.<sup>5</sup> As late as 1840, Lynchburg had a population of but some 5,000 persons<sup>6</sup>; and, as late as 1847, Danville was a town of only about 1,500 inhabitants.<sup>7</sup> Norfolk was some 160 or so miles away. To secure the household commodities that he needed, and to

<sup>1</sup> Cumberland C. H., Deed Book, 16, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Volume relating to Randolph's Adm. vs. Hobson, Va. State Libr.

<sup>3</sup> Jan. 14, 1813, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.

<sup>4</sup> July 4, 1814, *Life of Quincy*, 356.

<sup>5</sup> *Hist. Colls. of Va.*, by Howe, 242.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*, 211.

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*, 429.

find a vent for the produce of his lands, Randolph maintained what was practically a wagon line between Roanoke and Richmond, and repeatedly in his correspondence we find references to his wagoner, Quashee, who, with Simon and other wagoners of his, must have been almost perpetually on the road hauling tobacco, wheat or flour from Roanoke to Richmond, and herdsgrass seed, clover seed, plaster, and domestic commodities of all sorts from Richmond to Roanoke. The nearest postoffice to Roanoke was at Charlotte Court House, 12 or 13 miles distant.<sup>1</sup> When we recall the ubiquitous service, which now brings the federal mail every secular day of the week practically to the door-step of every negro cabin in Charlotte County, we can scarcely refrain from smiling when we read these words in a letter written by Randolph to Dr. Dudley in 1810: "Direct to Charlotte C. H., 'Roanoke, near Charlotte C. H., Va.'"<sup>2</sup> As late as the year 1832, Randolph told Nathan Loughborough that he had been reduced to sending three times and often four times a week to Charlotte Court House for his mail.<sup>3</sup> (a)

Living under such circumstances of isolation, it is not surprising that he should have written to Dr. Brockenbrough from Oakland, the home of his friend, Wm. R. Johnson, in 1829: "I shall with a sick heart, as well as dead, try to get to my *lair* by the middle of next week."<sup>4</sup>

In the first year of the 19th century, when he was residing at Bizarre, his postal facilities were even more limited; for in that year he wrote to Nicholson that the post arrived but once a week at the little village (Farmville) adjacent to his residence.<sup>5</sup>

Roanoke produced large quantities of tobacco. In 1810, before its acreage had been enlarged by subsequent

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 39.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Oct. 29, 1810, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 74.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Feb. 16, 1832, Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Nov. 26, 1829, *Mo. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>5</sup> July 1, 1800, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

purchases, it produced 49 hogsheads of tobacco and 1,541 barrels of corn.<sup>1</sup> The tobacco, grown on Roanoke in that year, however, should not be accepted as its standard of production, since we are informed by Randolph that its tobacco crop in 1810 was "very indifferent."<sup>2</sup> In 1814, no less than 430,000 hills of tobacco were destroyed by the great freshet of that year on the Roanoke lowgrounds alone, besides corn, oats, and wheat.<sup>3</sup> In the succeeding year, Randolph wrote to his friend, David Parish, that, notwithstanding the unfavorable season, he had made the greatest crop ever raised at Roanoke. "This," he said, "I calculate will make me a return of from \$20,000 to \$25,000—a small affair for you great nabobs, who deal in millions of money and hundreds of thousands of acres of land."<sup>4</sup> During the career of Randolph, the market prices of tobacco underwent violent fluctuations. In 1805, when he was still residing at Bizarre, he wrote to Nicholson that the merchants in Richmond had offered him no more than \$7.00 per hundred-weight for his tobacco.<sup>5</sup> In 1814, when the War of 1812 was under way, he wrote to Josiah Quincy that tobacco had sold in Richmond as high as \$13.10 per hundred-weight<sup>5</sup>; and, in 1816, he informed Dr. Dudley from Richmond that he had sold his tobacco for \$20.00 per hundred-weight, payable in the succeeding July.<sup>6</sup>

A few weeks later when at Roanoke he wrote to Dr. Dudley that a general apprehension of famine pervaded the land, and that \$6.00 and \$7.50 had been given in advance for new corn from the stack.<sup>7</sup> In the letter to Nicholson, to which we have just referred, he stated that he had lost nearly \$1,000 by the recent fall in the

<sup>1</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Oct. 30, 1815, Beverley D. Tucker MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Richm., Apr. 12, 1805, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>5</sup> Richm., March 1, 1814, *Life of Quincy*, 350.

<sup>6</sup> Aug. 10, 1816, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 178.

<sup>7</sup> Sept. 3, 1816, *Id.*, 179.

price of flour, but that, by the sale of both his flour and his tobacco, he hoped to raise enough money to pay his debts at home, and to leave him \$3,000 or \$4,000 for a voyage to Europe, which he contemplated. At the time of Randolph's death, he is said to have had more than \$20,000 in bank; but this balance may have been derived in part from the sums which he received as Minister to Russia.

But to the general reader more interesting than the tobacco and corn grown on the Roanoke estate were the horses reared on it by Randolph, either for his own personal use or for the competitions of the race track. From his early manhood until the day when he sat up on his death-bed at Philadelphia, cracking his coach whip, he was passionately addicted to horses, and to all the different forms of recreation and sport to which they minister. Nicholson, it seems, had some kinsman who shared Randolph's tastes in this respect, for, in 1802, Randolph, on his return to Bizarre from Congress, by way of Richmond, wrote to Nicholson that he had seen Nicholson's "little nabob" uncle beaten for three successive days, to his irrepressible mortification.

"Desdemona, that jewel which thousands were sacrificed to obtain," Randolph further said, "is now of as little worth as her biped namesake, after the frantic Moor had wrecked his jealous fury on her fair form."<sup>1</sup>

In 1805, Randolph wrote to Nicholson that the races at Richmond were over, and that Mr. Selden had started a colt of his that had run with great credit three heats of 4 miles each, but had not won.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, it is said by W. B. Green, one of Randolph's neighbors, that Randolph was generally unsuccessful on the turf.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, May 9, 1802, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Richm., Oct. 12, 1805, *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Bouldin, 25.



**JOHN RANDOLPH OF ROANOKE**

*By William Henry Brown.*



One of the features of the races which were the subject of Randolph's letter to Nicholson, was a great match for \$3,000 between Mr. Tayloe's Peacemaker, 5 years old (118 lbs.), and Mr. Batt's Florizet, 4 years old (106 lbs.); both by Diomed. It was won by Florizet, Randolph said in a subsequent letter to Nicholson, in a canter.<sup>1</sup>

"Thus you see," he observed, "whilst you turbulent folks on the east of Chesapeake are wrangling about Snyder and McKean, we old Virginians are keeping it up *more majorum*. *De gustibus non est disputandum*, says the proverb. Nevertheless, I cannot envy the taste of him who finds more amusement in the dull scurrility of a newspaper than in Weatherby's Calendar, and prefers an election ground to a race field."

And few persons, even professional turfmen, we venture to say, have ever been more familiar with Weatherby's calendar than Randolph. Convincing evidence of this fact is to be found in more than one letter from his hand, including one which he addressed to his friend, John S. Skinner, of Baltimore, in which he called off the names of celebrated horses, as if his life had mainly been spent in the pasture field and on the judge's stand at race courses.<sup>2</sup> It was an easy thing to inflame his pride about one of his horses. On one occasion, he offered for sale at public auction one of his best stallions, Roanoke, by the famous Old Sir Archie out of Lady Bunsbury. For a considerable time, there was no bid made, but, at length, Hugh Wyllie, the owner of Marske, a renowned race horse, bid £50; whereupon Randolph flared up in flaming indignation, and, turning a face full of anger to Wyllie, exclaimed: "Do you, Sir, bid £50 for a horse that pushed Marske up to the throat-latch?" There was a dead silence, and Roanoke was led away unsold.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, Oct. 23, 1815, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Apr. 10, 1830, *Md. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>3</sup> Bouldin, 26.



One of the most famous races ever attended by Randolph was that on Long Island in 1823, between Eclipse, the pride of the North, and Henry, the pride of the South. In its day, this race stirred up fully as much popular excitement as the subsequent debate between Webster and Hayne. Just as the two horses were about to start off, a stranger walked up to Randolph, and offered to bet \$500 on Eclipse. "Done," Randolph said. "Col. Thompson will hold the stakes," said the stranger. "Who will hold Col. Thompson," replied Randolph—a reply which has been frequently repeated on race tracks from that day to this.<sup>1</sup> During this race, Randolph is said to have stood in a very conspicuous position, surrounded by rival backers of the two sections, and, misled by his disposition to disparage what he once called the wrong side of the Potomac, he was very confident of the success of Henry. Afterwards, when the host of assembled spectators were vociferously applauding Purdy, the jockey who had ridden the victorious Eclipse, he was heard saying in his satirical accents: "Well, gentlemen, it is a lucky thing for the country that the President of the United States is not elected by *acclamation*, else *Mr. Purdy would be our next President beyond a doubt.*"<sup>2</sup> When Jared Sparks was in Richmond in May, 1726, one of the years in which Randolph lost his mental balance, he found the whole town, gentlemen, ladies, mechanics, and negroes, agog with excitement over the pending races. "John Randolph was here yesterday," he said, "with the appearance and manners of a madman. He carried in his hand a large purse of silver coin. With this he went to the races. He talked wildly and behaved extravagantly."<sup>3</sup>

In reading Randolph's letters, we are struck, first, with the great number of his horses, and, secondly, with the

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 26.

<sup>2</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 2, 43.

<sup>3</sup> *Life of Sparks*, by Adams, v. 1, 454.

strong feeling of personal attachment that he cherished for them. In one of his letters to Dr. Dudley, he speaks of his numerous idle horses, and we can readily believe that the adjectives were not misapplied. Both when he lived at Bizarre and Roanoke, he frequently mentioned his horses by name in his correspondence with his friends. In his letters to Dr. Dudley, while he still lived at Bizarre, he often refers to his favorites in language that trenches closely upon the affection of one human being for another. "I hope," he wrote on one occasion, "Mr. Galding will attend to poor little Minikin."<sup>1</sup> On another occasion, he wrote:

"How does the stock fare this bad weather? Are the Sans-Culottes fillies in good plight? An account of matters on the plantation might supply the subject of a letter. How is poor old Jacobin? and all the rest of the houyhnhnmns?"<sup>2</sup>

Sans-Culotte and Jacobin, of course, were given their names at the beck of the same Gallomania which led Joseph Bryan to speak of Randolph's little godson as "Citizen Randolph." Could the Jacobin mentioned by Randolph in his letter to Dr. Dudley have been the Jacobin that he says in his 1830 journal that he had sold to David Sims for \$150?<sup>3</sup> If so, the price was no greater than the one at which he wrote to Dr. Dudley on one occasion that he had sold each of his colts.<sup>4</sup> For Randolph's day, the general run of his horses commanded very good prices, and by his neighbor, W. B. Green, we are told that, after his death, his stud of blooded horses brought high prices at auction, and were, in many instances, purchased by gentlemen who resided outside of the State of Virginia.<sup>5</sup> "If anyone will give you \$1,000

<sup>1</sup> March 18, 1808, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 5.

<sup>2</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 12, 1808, *Id.*, 46.

<sup>3</sup> *Va. Hist. Soc.*

<sup>4</sup> Richm., May 16, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 158.

<sup>5</sup> Bouldin, 26.

for Gracchus," he wrote to Dr. Dudley, "take it."<sup>1</sup> We know, too, that he was once offered for one of his saddle horses \$500.<sup>2</sup>

It evidently cost him a considerable twinge of pain to sell any of his pets. After selling two saddle horses—Bloomsbury and Fidget—to his friend David Parish, of Philadelphia, he wrote to Dr. Dudley, who was in Philadelphia at the time, that in reminding him of them, Dr. Dudley had recalled to his memory some unpleasant, at least mournful, recollections.<sup>3</sup> Minimus, "his little bay," Duette, Brunette, Hyperion, to whom he deemed every rival but a satyr, Everlasting, Spot, Roanoke, Topaz, Rosetta, Boojet, Witch, Rob Roy, Black Warrior, Yellow Jacket, Gascoigne, Junius, "the finest horse and foal-getter in the world," Fairy Queen, Agnes Sorel, Wildfire, Fidget, Bloomsbury, John Hancock, Rinaldo, Earl Grey, Miss Peyton, Hob, Ranger, Never Tire, and Daredevil are some of the names which turn up in Randolph's journals and letters in connection with his stables and pastures.

"We are burnt to a cinder," he wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough in 1828, "although I had beautiful verdure this summer until late in July; but, if you could see but my colt Topaz, out of Ebony, my filly Sylph, out of Witch, or my puppy Ebony, you would admit that the wonders of the world were ten, and these three of them."<sup>4</sup>

Randolph raised horses of all sorts—race horses, draft horses, and saddle horses. (a) What some of them were we can well judge from their names, to say nothing of perilous situations in which at least one of them involved him. Wildfire! (b) Daredevil! Yellow Jacket, out of

<sup>1</sup> Richm., Mar. 7, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Nathan Loughborough MSS.

<sup>3</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 3, 1812, 118 (note).

<sup>4</sup> Roanoke, Aug. 10, 1828, *Garland*, v. 2, 310.

Frenzy! we experience little difficulty in forming a mental picture of what these nervous, mettlesome, and wicked-eyed creatures were.

Of a very different order was his steady, trustworthy horse Spot. "I should like to meet Spot," he wrote to Dr. Dudley on one occasion from Georgetown, "to take me through the sloughs and over the ruts and gullies between that place (Richmond) and Obsto. I shall go *via* Farmville and Prince Edward Court."<sup>1</sup> Five years after this letter was written, Randolph wrote to Dr. Dudley:

"Spot, I fear, is irreparably ruined by a disease which, when of the worst type, is as incurable as the glanders or the farcy. I succeeded, you remember, with poor old Rosetta, but she always carried a stiff neck; but that case was treated *secundum artem*, and not in the stupid, sottish style of our *soi-disant* farriers."<sup>2</sup>

Of all Randolph's draft and saddle horses, Brunette and Fidget, we should say, had the most speed and the best bottom. Among his journal entries, is one which states that on Sept. 23, 1811, Randolph, behind Brunette and Fidget, covered the distance between Roanoke and Prince Edward Court House, 34 miles, in 4 hours and 20 minutes. All this hurry apparently was because he wished to be on hand to hear Caleb Baker tried for murder, and defended by Beverley Tucker.<sup>3</sup>

Whatever else may have palled in his latter years upon the interest of Randolph, his horses never did. On one occasion, when at Roanoke, he noted that Euston had broken his left fore-leg above the knee<sup>4</sup>; and, 8 days later, that a foal by Hyperion out of Duchess, produce of 1809,

<sup>1</sup> Georgetown, Mar. 4, 1817, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 197.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Jan. 27, 1822, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 243.

<sup>3</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

had been found dead in the pasture.<sup>1</sup> "You have never mentioned whether the chestnut gelding colt is yet lame or not," he reminds Dr. Dudley in one letter from Georgetown<sup>2</sup>; and, three days later, he asks Dr. Dudley in another letter: "How is the chestnut gelding out of the blaze-faced S. C. mare?"<sup>3</sup> "I believe I omitted to tell you that I wished you to use Everlasting; pray be merciful to her," was his petition to Dr. Dudley in a third letter.<sup>4</sup>

Nor was Randolph more passionately attached to his horses than he was to his dogs. A fit preface to what we shall say on this subject is his general observations in the Diary on dogs, in which he takes ireful exception to the opinion of Jefferson that dogs were a pernicious, at least a useless, race, and that, to save food and put an end to hydrophobia, measures ought to be taken by law for their extirpation. The observations are as follows, and remind us not a little of Byron's epitaph on Boatswain:

"The hydrophobia, Sir, is a disease of the wolf, the fox, and domestic cat, as well as of the dog. Were the dogs all destroyed, we should be overrun by them and by other vermin—and we should deserve so to be for having, upon the principle of cold calculation, exterminated the *best* friend of man. Worthless dogs, like horses, etc., of the same description, only prove that the breed should be more attended to. There are thousands of horses, black cattle, etc., which serve only '*fruges consumere*' without adding anything to the stock of public wealth; but shall we therefore extirpate those valuable species of animals? When a law is passed to exterminate dogs, I shall set *my dogs* on the officer who comes to execute it, and back them with my gun. The only fault with which they have been ever charged, and the only one, which, in the course of 3,000 years' association with man, they have acquired from him, is worrying an unhappy individual of their own species whom they find in distress. The strongest proof, in my

<sup>1</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>2</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 8, 1817, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 188.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, Feb. 11, 1817; *Id.*, 189.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, May 11, 1812; *Id.*, 123.

opinion, of the unfitness of the dog to live is his having attached himself exclusively to so base and ungrateful an animal as man. If all men were like this philosopher, they would merit that their nightly guardians, the faithful, honest dogs, should conspire and strangle them in their sleep. Like many other Laputan theories, totally mistaken in principle, object, and result."

To say how many dogs Randolph had in the course of his life would be almost like trying to say how many horses he had. In an unpublished letter before us, dated March 4, 1833, the writer stated that Randolph was in Washington, when she wrote, with an English chariot and four horses, two men servants, and a bare-footed boy who had seven dogs under his care.<sup>1</sup> Whatever change, therefore, may have taken place in his cynical views about man since 1804, when his observations on dogs were inserted in the Diary, none had taken place in his partial estimate of dogs. More than once in letters written by or about him, the head of a dog or puppy looks out at us over the body of his vehicle as he flounders along over the long lake of mud between Washington and Richmond. It would be curious to run down all his contemporaries who named a son after him, or gave him a dog. Commodore John Rogers, for certainty, gave him a Spanish bloodhound bitch; Beaumontais, a setter; Mr. Hackley, Judith's brother-in-law, a double-nosed Spanish pointer, and M. DeKantzow, the Minister of His Swedish and Norwegian Majesty, a slut of some species or other which came to be known as Sylph, and whose only puppy, despite her high degree, was begotten by a cur—a *faux pas* that she never had an opportunity to repeat, as she was afterwards bitten by a mad dog, and was killed on that account; all of which, like many other particulars of the same sort, is duly chronicled in the Diary.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Susan B. Taylor, to her nephew, Langborne M. Williams MSS.

<sup>2</sup> 1824, *Journal*, May 11, 1824, *Va. Hist. Soc.*

Of the double-nosed pointer, we only know that she was stolen from the Fountain Inn in Baltimore, but was recovered by another inn-keeper at Washington, and turned over to Wm. Bernard, of Mansfield, the owner of one of the famous old Virginia country seats, to whom Randolph, true to his working principle that all life is a commerce,<sup>1</sup> was generous enough to resign her.

The Diary also records the fact that J. S. Skinner gave him a setter dog, named Topaz; Dennis A. Smith, "a rough Scotch terrier," named Vixen, and Elisha Hundley, "a black puppy with white legs," named Keeper. (a) Carlo, Echo, Sancho, Dido, Juno, Banquo, Bibo, Cæsar, Cæsar No. 2, Milo, Mina, Venus, Ebony, Lion, Tiger, and Nero (a fine house-dog) are the names of some of the other dogs or puppies owned at one time or another by Randolph.<sup>2</sup>

Nor were Randolph's friends more generous in presenting him with dogs than he was in returning the favor. Another proof that, until Randolph's "lonesome latter years," he and Robert Carrington were good friends is the fact that the Diary records the gift by him to Carrington of Dash, "pupped," Randolph declares, "in March (late), 1826, by old Czar, the most celebrated dog between Richmond and New York, out of a very fine slut."

Sometimes, a friend would send a slut to Roanoke to be crossed by one of his fine dogs. Thus he tells us in the Diary that in 1822, Maj. John Nelson's setter slut was sent to Roanoke in August of that year, and was "warded" by Bibo. For this service, he received his toll in the form of a fine male puppy.

Nothing relating to Randolph's dogs was, in his eyes, too trivial to be commemorated in the Diary. Dido we know was responsive enough to bear 6 puppies to Sancho,

<sup>1</sup> Letter to J. R. Bryan, Roanoke, July 29, 1832, Dr. St. G. J. Grinnan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

though he had had access to her only once; Carlo was a latch-opener, which speaks highly at any rate for his intelligence; and Venus, with all the charms that her name implies, was purchased by him from a steerage passenger in 1826 for the paltry sum of \$5.00. And, in reading the journals and letters of Randolph, it is curious to note how frequently his dogs, though far from being exposed to the almost incessant peril, to which *feræ naturæ* are, became involved in more or less tragic casualties. It would seem that Randolph could not always give up the companionship of dogs, even when he was journeying abroad; for Venus was purchased from a steerage passenger when his face was set towards England, only to be lost after he arrived there.<sup>1</sup> The seller, Randolph says in the Diary, with the emotion of tenderness that a child rarely failed to arouse in him, was returning to Scotland with his wife and "little daur Jeannie."

When in his own country not only did Randolph's dog have the freedom of the floor of the House of Representatives as fully as one of its former members, but, when he was at Roanoke, that of the homes of his neighbors:

"Whenever he made a visit," W. B. Green tells us, "he brought some of his dogs with him, and they were suffered to poke their noses into everything, and to go where they pleased from kitchen to parlor. They were a great annoyance to ladies and house-keepers. This, however, was obliged to be quietly submitted to, as any unkind treatment to his dogs would have been regarded as an insult to himself."<sup>2</sup>

Somewhere Darwin expresses the idea that to a dog, eyeing his master, the form of the latter must present the appearance of a demigod. To Randolph's dogs his tall, lank figure must have been at least that of some kind of benignant genius. Nothing can be more intensely human than the unfailing interest and affection that he lavished

<sup>1</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>2</sup> Bouldin, 25.



upon them from youth until death. Like his horses, they seemed, in his contemplation, to belong, at any rate, to some stage of being, intermediate between the brute creation and man.

"Remember me to old Carlo, and Dido, and Sancho," he says in one of his letters to Dr. Dudley.<sup>1</sup> (a) "You have not said a word about the dogs," he complained in another letter to Dr. Dudley<sup>2</sup> "You say nothing about the dogs. Has Sancho recovered his eyesight? Is Dido likely to have another litter? and how comes on the puppy?" are some of the forms that his solicitous inquiries about his dogs took when he was absent at Babel.

Carlo, Echo, and Dido seem to have been his favorites. In one of his letters to Dr. Dudley, after telling him that Mr. Hackley had sent him two Spanish pointers, one double-nosed and the only one of that species that could be procured, he added loyally: "However, I question if they are better than Echo or Dido whom old Carlo is now guarding with a Spaniard's jealousy."<sup>3</sup> The fracture of "poor Sancho's" hind leg was bad enough,<sup>4</sup> but, when Echo died, it was almost as if he had lost a two-footed friend.

"The death of poor Echo is a severe blow upon me," he wrote to Dr. Dudley. "'I ne'er shall look upon *her* like again,' and, among the inducements which I felt to revisit my own comfortless home, it was not the least that I should again see her and witness the sagacity and attachment of this humble yet faithful four-footed friend."<sup>5</sup>

One of the important events in Randolph's life was a scrape in which Echo involved herself in 1810. In giving

<sup>1</sup> York Buildings, Dec. 27, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 170.

<sup>2</sup> Georgetown, Feb. 4, 1817, *Id.*, 187.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Sep. 3, 1811, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 101.

<sup>4</sup> Apr. 8, 1816, *Id.*, 176.

<sup>5</sup> Georgetown, June 5, 1812, *Id.*, 124.

the date of this incident, we but follow the example of Randolph himself, who did not disdain to enter even the date of the death of a favorite dog in the Diary. The story is told in a letter from him to Dr. Dudley, written just after he had returned from Mecklenburg Court to Roanoke, where he had left Echo confined at the beginning of his absence.

"I have just learned," he said, "that she went off yesterday morning with the chain upon her, and I fear that the poor thing may have gotten entangled with it, so as to prevent her getting along, and, in that condition, may be exposed to perish. I cannot express how much I am distressed at this thought. I shall, therefore, dispatch Phil in the morning with this letter in quest of her."<sup>1</sup>

Made restless by the loss of her master, Echo had coursed in half a night, with a trace-chain about her neck, over the 40 miles of distance between Roanoke and Bizarre, but had had the good sense never once to leave the highway.<sup>2</sup> Another reference to this incident is readable, if for no other reason, because it is a good specimen of the pleasing way in which Randolph's interest in the smallest practical details could be given a graceful turn by his literary culture:

"I am obliged to you also, my dear Theodore," he said in a letter to Dr. Dudley, "for the intention with which you sent up poor Echo, whose retreat equals that of the 10,000 under Xenophon, although she is not likely to have so eloquent an historian of *her* anabasis."<sup>3</sup>

Echo, the reader should be told, had been a part of the Bizarre household, before Randolph took up his permanent residence at Roanoke, and, shifted from Bizarre to

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Aug. 6, 1810, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 69.

<sup>2</sup> J. R.'s Diary, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 70.

<sup>3</sup> Roanoke, Aug. 9, 1810, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 70.

Roanoke, did not find it easy to conquer the force of old habits.

In going over Randolph's library at Roanoke after his death, Hugh Blair Grigsby observed this marginal entry in Randolph's handwriting on the leaves of one of his books, which had been torn: "Done by Bibbo when a puppy." The inference intended to be suggested by the writer, of course, was that Bibbo would not have been guilty of such a shabby trick if he had arrived at years of discretion.

And ah! how joyously for a moment at least does the blood surge again even in those depleted veins which Juvenal grimly says warm with fever alone when the superannuated sportsman reads this description in a letter from Randolph to Theodore of Dido:

"On Wednesday I shot with Mr. Bouldin, and I never saw any pointer behave better than Dido, fetching the birds excepted. I had given her some lessons in the dining-room, and one day's previous practice by herself. She found the birds in the highest style—stood as staunchly as old Carlo—never flushed one and hunted with the most invincible resolution. She followed the worm of the fence through thick briers and put up successively in each corner fifteen to twenty birds. I was next the river; and, although I could see her, they flew next the field except two that I killed. She was delighted to see them fall and entered into the spirit of the sport fully."<sup>1</sup>

A fitting conclusion, perhaps, to what we have said about Randolph and his dogs, is a letter which he wrote to an unknown correspondent in the year 1826.

"Mr. Randolph has received the dog, and is very much obliged to you for him; but, at the same time, unless it be too unreasonable, he will be very thankful for the puppy. He is fully sensible to your kind and obliging attentions in ministering to one of his ruling passions, '*Gaudet equis canibusque.*'"

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Oct. 29, 1810, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 72.

Be pleased to send the puppy down here by the first safe conveyance. Mr. Randolph can then send him around with his other effects by the steamboat to Richmond. \* \* \* \* \* There is constant intercourse between Petersburg and Farmville by bateaux, and Farmville is the place of deposit of Mr. Randolph's tobacco; but the mischief is that the steamboats cannot get up to Petersburg, so that a link of ten miles land carriage from City Point creates so much difficulty in the communication that, except for heavy articles, that are not liable to be injured, Richmond is the best route.....for .....setter puppies, glass, china, and other brittle and precious ware."<sup>1</sup>

During the shooting season, Randolph's setters and pointers must have had a happy existence at Roanoke; for his journals and letters are filled with the fresh, stimulating breath of the autumnal fields of Southside Virginia, and the manly jocund sports of which they were the scene. In all his early tastes and habits, he was a typical Southside Virginia boy. These are the terms in which he recalled his childhood at Matoax in a letter to Garnett:

"The weather still continues bad. The snow is driven through a dark rheumatic atmosphere, but there is something pleasing, although melancholy, to me in the sight. I think of the days of my boyhood, when I used to trudge through such weather to visit my traps. I can see the very spot, covered with green briars, where I used to set them, and felt my heart beat as I approached with anxiety for the fate of my adventure. Those were happy days, and, if the murderous axe had not despoiled the finest groves I ever saw, I would purchase the place, and lay my bones there."<sup>2</sup> (a)

Indeed there was no time in Randolph's life when he could not say truthfully with the Douglas that he would rather hear the lark sing than the mouse squeak. So long

<sup>1</sup> Washington, May 6, 1826.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, Feb. 10, 1823.

as he retained a moderate measure of health, he found a large part of his enjoyment in the open sky, the fair face of the earth, and the simple phenomena of its forests, fields, and waters. He owned several copies of Wilson's *Ornithology*, and the feathered life about Roanoke must have sent him frequently to its pages for identification or comparison. Throughout all his more vigorous years his attitude towards bird and mammal at Roanoke reminds us not a little of Gilbert White and his *Natural History of Selborne*. Now we find him measuring and weighing an owl, 4 ft. and 2 inches from tip to tip, and 1 pound and 6 oz. in weight; or weighing a turtle, which had crawled up the Ferry Branch from the Staunton River. It weighed 28 pounds.<sup>1</sup> The circumstance that Henry Dies had killed a ground-hog at the Lower Quarter of Roanoke he thought quite material enough to be entered in the Diary; and he had as little compunction as Gilbert White would have had about noting in one of his other journals that on July 14, 1818, a raccoon had been killed at Roanoke. Indeed, he knew the relation between rats and the corn that he grew on the Staunton River lowgrounds too well to refrain from entering in the same journal four days later even the fact that he had killed 100 rats.<sup>2</sup> A pang went through him when he heard that a hawk had finally destroyed the two wood-ducks, whose movements he had long observed; and well might this have been the case; for civilization has worked few small tragedies of more moment than the practical extinction of this beautiful bird in parts of the United States where it was once abundant and something more than a mere migrant. If he flushed a wild turkey or a pheasant, in one of his horseback rambles at Roanoke, he was likely to mention the fact in the Diary, whether he had had his gun along with him or not. In other words, so long as he was not too old or

<sup>1</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

<sup>2</sup> Journal, Libr. Cong.

diseased for the "vernal joys," of which he deplored the loss so pathetically in the words of Michael Bruce, every rural sight or sound was to him a source of pure and deep-seated joy. (a)

Both at Bizarre and Roanoke, Randolph was constantly, during the proper seasons, whenever he could escape from the trammels of Congress, engaged in the pastime of shooting; usually, if not always, with one of his nephews or other relations or friends, and at one time he was a fox-hunter too.<sup>1</sup> In the Diary, there are frequent references to the wild turkey—that *coureur du bois*, fleet of foot and fleet of wing, which in a state of barnyard degeneracy is a good illustration of what a nation comes to which forgets that there is such a thing as war; the pheasant, now but a rare denizen of the Charlotte County woods; the whistling plover, a fine game bird which has passed away, or all but passed away, in that county with the passenger pigeon; the reed bird, which drops that name and its other *aliases*—"rice bird," and "bob-o-link"—and resumes in the valley of the Staunton its French name "ortolan"; the sora, or *soree*, (*vulgarly* "soaruss"), which vanishes with the first frost, like a ghost with the first streak of morning light; the wood-cock which appears to be a so much easier mark for the gunner than it really is; the jack-snipe, hard to hit in his first flurry, but, afterwards, by no means so; the bull bat, which the merest tyro can bring down without difficulty when he is flying along in a direct course, provided that he is low enough, but which hopelessly bewilders any but a practiced eye when he is circling tortuously about the eaves of a weevil-infested barn; and, above all, that nonpareil of small game birds, the quail or partridge, as he is called in Virginia, which needs only a little protection from the hawk and the trespasser to be as abundant in the valley of the Staunton as it ever was. It is a curious fact that there is no mention in the journals or

<sup>1</sup> *Reg. of Debates*, 1827-8, v. 4, Part I., 1380.

letters of Randolph of the common dove, which is probably as abundant in Charlotte County to-day as it ever was and has always been considered there a game bird, or of the passenger pigeon, which is now extinct, but which in Randolph's time darkened the very sky with its countless numbers; or, with one exception, of the wild goose, which, like the mallard and the dusky duck, still winters in the valley of the Staunton. There are references in the Diary to the squirrel, which warrant the idea, that, in Randolph's eye, this animal was worth a load of powder and shot. For instance, on one occasion, he mentions the fact that he has shot two squirrels "flying"; and, under date of Aug. 13, 1811, there is this entry too: "Boys killed blackbirds." But blackbirds and meadow-larks, of which, by the way, no mention is made either by Randolph in his journals, were the objects upon which a Southside Virginia boy usually began when he wished to learn how to shoot on the wing; not unlike the barber apprentices in Ireland in the 18th century, who are said to have learned how to shave by first shaving beggars.

In Randolph's time there was, of course, no such thing as a breech-loading gun, but only muzzle-loaders, and once his hand was dreadfully lacerated by an explosion caused by pouring a charge of powder from his powder-flask down the barrel of his gun when a piece of ignited wadding was still sticking in it. (a) He evidently had a sense of strong attachment to his fowling-pieces which were imported from England, and the weights of several of them are entered in the Diary.

In October, 1811, he had not yet become a sufficient Sabbatarian to scruple about shooting ortolans and partidges on Sunday with John Morton and Henry Tucker, the brother of George Tucker the historian.<sup>1</sup> "To day we broke the Sabbath, according to the estimation of Puritans," he said.

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Oct., 20, 1811, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 111.

Randolph was a good shot, though, apparently, by no means a crack shot. In one of his letters to Nicholson, he mentions the fact that he had shot 8 partridges and a hare, a day or so before, at 12 shots. But this was at Bizarre.<sup>1</sup> Later, on one occasion at Roanoke, he killed 2 woodcock, 4 partridges, and 2 plover at 8 shots.<sup>2</sup> Other feats, approximating this measure of skill, are mentioned in the Diary, but neither at Bizarre nor at Roanoke do his bags appear to have been very remarkable. We do find this entry in one of his journals: "Killed 30 pieces; Dr. 22." But it is not altogether clear that the shooting on this day was limited to Dr. Dudley and himself. One bag of 45 partridges, and another amazing bag of 65 partridges, almost as famous as the great flood of 1877 in the Staunton, has been known by the author to have been made in his boyhood in a single day by a single gunner on a Staunton River plantation some 15 or 16 miles west of Roanoke. But this was when poaching was not so common on such a plantation as it is to-day; and, moreover, when the law permitted shooting before the vegetation of the fields had been entirely killed down by frost or the birds had acquired their full strength of wing.

In the mind of Randolph, his slaves, some 373 in number when he died, were intimately associated with his horses and dogs. Like the wife in *The Locksley Hall* of Tennyson, one of them was to him a little better than his horse, a little dearer than his dog; but then he loved his horses and dogs so intensely that this is saying much. The birth of the last black infant at the Ferry Quarter is entered in the Diary in very much the same matter of fact way as the birth of the last foal dropped by one of his English mares. "Sally has a child; black mare (Quashee's) died on the 12th," is one entry in it. "What of cloverseed? of Spot, and Roanoke?—one or both of which I shall

<sup>1</sup> Bizarre, Oct. 24, 1806, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.

<sup>2</sup> J. R.'s Diary.



want very soon? Of the dogs? and though last, not least, of old Essex (*a*) and Co., and little Molly?" (*b*), is a paragraph in one of Randolph's letters to Dr. Dudley.<sup>1</sup> On another occasion, pining for news from Roanoke, after his long sojourn in Richmond, in the winter of 1813-14, Randolph wrote to Theodore: "I wish when you write to me, you would call to mind such objects as you suppose would interest me; even the dogs and little Molly, I would rather hear of than nothing."<sup>2</sup> "You have not said one word of Dido or her puppies, or my poor old Carlo, or little Molly, or Essex, or Jupiter, or Nancy. *J'en suis fâché*."<sup>3</sup> But, until his mind finally succumbed, Randolph was a very kind, not to say affectionate, master.

"Mr. Randolph was a humane master, and a kind neighbor," Sawyer tells us. "He saw personally," Sawyer continues, "into the wants and the complaints of his numerous slaves; administered to them, as the occasion required, and studied their comfort in every particular. He used daily to ride over his fields, when they were at work, and, when he approached, they would make their obeisance with a touch of the hat, which he would return with a nod or bow."<sup>4</sup>

It is said by Bouldin that Randolph's servants were the best and politest in the county, and, if they really deserved this commendation, it was doubtless because of the kind and considerate treatment that they had received at the hands of their master.<sup>5</sup> (*c*) The Rev. James Waddell Alexander goes so far as to declare that Randolph was adored by his negroes.<sup>6</sup> This is strong language, but it is corroborated by a paragraph in Josiah Quincy's *Figures of the Past*.

<sup>1</sup> Babel, Jan. 14, 1817, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 182.

<sup>2</sup> Richm., May 16, 1814, *Id.*, 158.

<sup>3</sup> York Buildings, Dec. 24, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 168.

<sup>4</sup> Sawyer, 47.

<sup>5</sup> Bouldin, 73.

<sup>6</sup> *Forty Yrs.' Letters*, v. 1, 270.

"A gentleman, whom I met in Washington," he says, "had returned with Randolph to his plantation after a session of Congress, and testified to me of the affection with which he was regarded by his slaves. Men and women reached toward him, seized him by the hand with perfect familiarity, and burst into tears of delight at his presence among them. His conduct to these humble dependents was like that of a most affectionate father among his children."<sup>1</sup>

Authentic instances are not wanting in which Randolph occasionally chastised one of his servants with his own hand; but, if any such incident can be referred to any period when his mental condition was normal, the fact can be reasonably reconciled with the parental relation that the words of Quincy depict. Certainly, all the facts disclosed by Randolph's journals and letters tend to bear out the statements of Sawyer and Quincy.

It was a remark of Wm. Cabell Rives that a Virginia plantation was a sort of mimic Commonwealth,<sup>2</sup> and we derive a renewed sense of the felicity of this description when the relations of Randolph to Roanoke and its black population and overseers are brought to our knowledge. Randolph's negroes were well fed and when, because of some natural catastrophe, there was any reason for him to doubt his ability to supply them with abundant food, his distress was poignant. Productive as Roanoke was, and many hands as well as mouths as it contained, Randolph had to buy, after his return from Russia, nearly \$2,000 worth of provisions for the maintenance of his slaves.<sup>3</sup> His slaves were also well clothed, doubtless principally with garments made out of cloth spun or woven on his own plantations; although he mentions in his letters purchases of cloth for his slaves made by him. We know also that his slaves were well provided with bed-clothing.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P. 228.      <sup>2</sup> *Life of Jas. Madison*, v. 1, 3.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, v. 2, 347.

<sup>4</sup> Bouldin, 71.

In his *Reminiscences of John Randolph*, the Rev. R. L. Dabney recalls a scene witnessed at Roanoke by Wm. Coles Dickinson, a horse breeder, on one occasion, when he had been taken to Roanoke by his business:

“Dickinson said that he spent the night by Mr. Randolph’s invitation. After supper, John came in and said to his master: ‘The people are ready, Sir.’ Randolph said to his guest: ‘My servants are expecting of me this evening the performance of a duty, which is a very important and interesting one to them. I make it a matter of conscience not to disappoint them. It is the distribution of the annual supply of blankets for the plantation. I must, therefore, beg you to excuse me for an hour, and to amuse yourself with the books and newspapers. Or, if you prefer to accompany me, I shall be glad to have you witness the proceeding.’ Dickinson said that he was eager to see all he could of this strange and famous man, and so he eagerly chose the latter proposal. They went to the preaching-house, where a large number of negroes were present, and John and others brought in large rolls of stout English blankets (Mr. Randolph had so strong a sense of the injustice of the protective tariffs that he refused on principle to buy anything of Yankee manufacture which shared this iniquitous plunder. His great tobacco crops were shipped to London, and sold there on his own account, and he bought there everything needed for his plantations.) He then began to call the roll of the adult servants. Each one, as he came forward, was required to exhibit the blankets which he already possessed. Some prudent ones exhibited four and received four new ones in addition; some presented two, and received two new ones; some one and received one. Some careless fellows had none to show, and were sent away without any, receiving a pretty keen rebuke instead. When it was over, Mr. Dickinson remarked to him that the principle of distribution seemed a very strange one, since those who needed new blankets the least got the most, and those who needed them most got none. Randolph answered: ‘No, sir; the Bible rule is mine, “He that hath, to him shall be given that he may have more abundance, and from him that hath not shall be

taken away that which he seemeth to have." ' He then explained that his purpose was to give his servants an impressive object lesson upon the virtue of thrift. That those careless fellows, who could present no blanket, had traded off for whiskey what he had given them, or had lazily allowed them to be burned or lost, and their disappointment would teach them to be wiser in future."<sup>1</sup>

A letter from Randolph to Dr. Brockenbrough, dated Nov. 15, 1831, not only evidences the fact that the negro children at Roanoke were warmly clad in wool during the winter, but also gives us an insight into the contents of a negro cabin of the best class there.

"I have been in a perpetual broil," he said, "with overseers and *niggers*. My head man I detected stealing the wool that was to have clad his own and the other children; the receiver the very rascal (one of Mr. Mercer's house-keepers) who flogged poor Juba, who had no wool, except upon his head. I have punished the scoundrel exemplarily, and shall send him to Georgia or Louisiana, at Christmas. He has a wife and three fine children. Here is a description of his establishment: a log house of the finest class, with two good rooms below, and lofts above; a barrel half full of meal (but two days to a fresh supply); steel shovel and tongs better than I have seen in any other house, my own excepted; a good bed, filled with hay; another, not so good, for his children; eight blankets; a large iron pot, and Dutch-oven; frying-pan; a large fat hog, finer than any in my pen; a stock of large pumpkins, cabbages, &c., secured for the winter. His house had a porch, or shed, to it, like my own."<sup>2</sup>

The attention of the reader has already been called to the fact that the efforts of John Randolph to impart religious instruction to his slaves went hand in hand, on soberer occasions than the one mentioned by the Rev. Mr. Clopton, with his efforts to impart it to such boys as

<sup>1</sup> *Union Seminary Mag.*, (1894-95), v. 6, 14-21.

<sup>2</sup> *Garland*, v. 2, 347.

happened to be under his roof. There could be no better proof of the considerate manner in which he looked after the material welfare of his negroes than the advanced ages of some of them who are named in the list of his emancipated slaves registered at Charlotte Court House. For instance the age of old Quash, whom we have more than once mentioned in these pages, is given in this register as 90 years, and that of his wife Nancy, called Mulatto Nancy, as 80. Among the persons registered was also Granny Hannah, aged 100 years.

Randolph's slaves were divided into two classes—his "out" servants, whose labor carried on his plantation operations, and his house servants, who performed the various menial services that his household establishment required. He was so frequently absent from Roanoke that his plantation affairs were largely left to the management of his overseers; consequently, it is not often that we obtain a glimpse of any of his field laborers in his journals and letters. On one occasion, however, they are brought rather dramatically to our notice by an order which he once gave to them, in the later years of his life, to save fodder on the Sabbath. As a result of this violation of the sanctity of the Sabbath, John Marshall, of Charlotte Court House, who was at Roanoke when the order was given, and heard it uttered, was summoned before the Grand Jury at Charlotte Court House to testify to the offence. He positively refused to make any answer to the Grand Jury, when questioned upon the subject, on the ground that to do so would be a breach of social duty. This excuse the Grand Jury declined to accept as valid, but, Marshall still refusing to answer, it was left no choice but to submit it to the Court, Judge Wm. Leigh, Randolph's intimate friend, who at once decided that a guest could not lawfully claim such a privilege. Hardly, however, had Marshall been remanded to the Grand Jury room when Randolph was driven up to

the court house in his English coach, drawn by four blooded horses. Leaving it, he proceeded directly into the court room, and took his seat immediately in front of Judge Leigh; announcing, audibly, in one of his strange half-whispers, that he understood that he was to be presented, and that he had come to make his defence. Happily for him, it did not become necessary for him to do so, because, when sent back to the Grand Jury room, Marshall had shrewdly raised the point that, under the revised Code of Virginia then in force, the act of each slave was a separate offence, and that the penalty prescribed for it, \$1.67, was below the jurisdiction of the Court. The incident rests upon the testimony of Wood Bouldin, of Charlotte County, who afterwards became a distinguished member of the Supreme Court of Appeals of Virginia, and by him we are also told that, if his memory was not at fault, E. W. Henry, the last surviving son of Patrick Henry, was the foreman of the Grand Jury.<sup>1</sup>

Repeatedly, however, certain of the house servants of Randolph are mentioned by him in one connection or another; and often in terms of the sincerest affection and sympathy. "Nancy," he wrote on one occasion, "is very ill. Old Essex, too, is laid up with a swelled jaw from a carious tooth. This, I believe, is the sum of our domestic news, except that old Dido is *plus caduque que son maître*."<sup>2</sup> To John Marshall, of Charlotte Court House, we are indebted for a vignette of Essex before he incurred the displeasure of his master in 1831.

"There was an old negro man, named Essex, who, according to his own and Mr. Randolph's account, was upwards of 80 years old. He was the most genteel servant I ever saw, and Mr. Randolph used to call him familiarly 'Daddy' Essex, and, although the relation of master and servant was kept up between them, it was done with the utmost cordiality and

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 31.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, June 10, 1821, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 221.

kindness in the manner of each which I had ever witnessed between master and slave. It was the custom of Essex, when leaving his master's service at night, to give him the usual salutation and wish him good repose; and this civility was returned by the master."<sup>1</sup>

To the two of his slaves, who were his body servants—Juba, or Jupiter, and John—Randolph was peculiarly attached, and, so closely associated were they with all the movements of their master that they became almost as well known as he was. In one of his letters to Dr. Dudley, Randolph asks him to remember him to old Essex, and Jupiter, and Nancy, and little Molly, and Hetty, and all the people. "I hope Jupiter does well," he adds.<sup>2</sup> "Remember me to Juba," is the postscript a year or so later to one of his letters to Dr. Dudley.<sup>3</sup> This was when Jupiter had been worn down by nursing Richard Stanford at Washington, and had gone back to Roanoke. "You say nothing of Juba," is a reminder that he gives to Dr. Dudley several weeks later.<sup>4</sup> Jupiter was twice prostrated by illness, while in the service of his master; once immediately after Stanford's death, and, subsequently, when Randolph was at St. Petersburg. Nothing could have been tenderer than the feelings excited in Randolph by each event. In one of his letters, he mentions the fact that Juba had murmured in one of his intervals of restless sleep after Stanford's death, "I wish master and I *was* at home." (a) Jupiter's second illness at St. Petersburg affected Randolph even more deeply. Describing it in a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, he said:

"In consequence of Juba's situation, I walked down one morning to the English boarding-house, where Clay had

<sup>1</sup> Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor., Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>2</sup> York Buildings, Dec. 27, 1814, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 170.

<sup>3</sup> Richm., Aug. 10, 1816, *Id.*, 178.

<sup>4</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 3, 1816, *Id.*, 179.



lodged, kept by a Mrs. Wilson, of whom I had heard a very high character as a nurse, and especially of servants. I prevailed upon her to take charge of the poor boy, which she readily agreed to do. I put Juba, on whom I had practiced with more than Russian energy, into my carriage, got into it, brought him into the bedroom taken for myself, had a blazing fire kindled so as to keep the thermometer at 65° morning, 70° afternoon; ventilated well the apartment; poured in the quinine, opium, and port wine, and snake-root tea for drink with a heavy hand (he had been previously purged with mercurials); and to that energy under God I owe the life of my dear, faithful Juba."<sup>1</sup>

There is also a pleasant reference to Juba in the reminiscences of Jacob Harvey.

"Why, Sir," he reports Randolph as being in the habit of saying of some leading politician, for whom he had no particular partiality, "he has not half the talents of my man Juba. Give Juba some more learning—book knowledge I mean, Sir; not *head-work*, he has *that*—and I'll match him against half the cabinet, Sir, for real, substantial talents."<sup>2</sup>

There are two references to Juba in Randolph's letters to John Randolph Clay. In one letter, he says: "Juba humbly but affectionately returns your greeting. Homer says that, in reducing man to the state of a slave, you take half his worth away. When you enfranchise a negro, you take away the remaining half."<sup>3</sup> In another letter, written during the same month, Randolph said: "Poor Juba sends his humble howdye'."<sup>4</sup> A Virginian, at any rate, will smile when he reads a statement in one of Randolph's letters from Richmond that Juba had cut his leg against the "rock"; that is the marble slabs, on the staircase in Dr. Brockenbrough's bank.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Garland, v. 2, 338.

<sup>2</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 353.

<sup>3</sup> Washington, Feb. 12, 1829, Libr. Cong.

<sup>4</sup> Washington, Feb. 3, 1829, Libr. Cong.

<sup>5</sup> Bank of Va., Dec. 22, 1813, 147.



If anything, John was still closer to Randolph than Juba. He was one of Randolph's body servants as early as 1803, and served him in that capacity until his last respiration.

"His treatment of servants and especially his own slaves," declares a friend of Randolph speaking of him as he knew him in 1805, "was that of the kindest master, and he always called his personal attendant 'Johnny'—a circumstance to my mind strongly indicative of habitual good will towards him."<sup>1</sup>

Twenty-seven years after these words were written, Randolph wrote a letter to his friend, Thomas A. Morton, from London, in which, after asking Morton to remember him to the old servants, particularly Syphax, Louisa, Sam, and Phil, he paid this tribute to John in a postscript: "John, my servant, is quite well. He has not been otherwise since we left the U. S., and is a perfect treasure to me. He desires his remembrance to Syphax, &c., &c."<sup>2</sup> In an earlier letter to Littleton Waller Tazewell, who had just lost one of his faithful servants, Randolph spoke of John in these terms:

"Your most welcome letter is just now put into my hands by my 'John,' who, if he lives as long, will be just such another, I trust, as the humble friend that you have lost. I know not at this time a better man, one of more conscientious, rational piety, or more trustworthy; although he neither sings hymns nor goes to night meetings, I have not a truer friend; no, not even yourself; but where am I wandering to?"<sup>3</sup>

Some few years afterwards, he wrote to John Randolph Clay: "People may say what they please, but I have found no better friends than among my own servants."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 173.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, 228.

<sup>3</sup> Washington, Feb. 20, 1826, L. W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS.

<sup>4</sup> Feb. 12, 1829, Clay MSS., Libr. Cong.

In the following letter from Randolph to his niece, he not only had something to say about the weaker side of John's character, but also some observations to make on his other servants and the management of servants generally:

“What you say about your Mammy does not reflect credit upon her character only, but on those who were her masters and mistresses. It does honor at once to your heart and understanding. I have never known very bad servants unless to bad masters and mistresses, who either were perpetually scolding and correcting, or fell into the other extreme of leaving them to themselves, and spoiling them by false indulgences. I was at home from March 22nd to the middle of November last year, and, in all that time, I never rebuked but one of my domestics (a woman), and that was once and once only, and not harshly. Finding fault never yet did good. Neither have I for years corrected them in any other way, and then only boys. I am satisfied that, if I had habitually found fault, they would have got used to it in a fortnight; now they watch my countenance like my faithful Newfoundland dog. I wish you could have seen Johnny, when Charles L. Bonaparte asked me at dinner the other day if the servant behind my chair was my famous man, John: so well known in Europe for his fidelity and attachment to me. This last he said, when I asked how famous? Now I took John a little boy, and shewed him that my purpose was never to punish him unless he compelled me to do so. He fell where the best have fallen, under the temptations and seductions of a town life. He became a sot when the fact was no longer to be concealed. I asked whether I had ever reproached him with a suspicion of the kind. He said that I never had. I replied: ‘I have had strong suspicions of it for three years. Go and report yourself to the overseer.’ He did so; worked manfully but (as was to be expected from one whose coat was always cut off the same piece of cloth as mine) they quarrelled. The overseer was an uncommonly just, humane, but resolute man. John went away (as he said, and as I now firmly believe) to get to me, but, as it was a short session of Congress, and we had in fact adjourned about the period of his elopement,

I then doubted it. He was taken up at Occoquan, and committed to Dumfries Jail. There, I let him lie about three months, directing the jailer to keep him on jail allowance, and to speak to no one but himself. He got many letters written, praying to come home. I sent a man to pay his charges and bring him home. They came together in the stage as far as Richmond, when my agent went to his own house in Powhatan, and John gladly made the best of his way home. I remitted him to his toil in the fields. He was the best hand (so Curd, the overseer, said) that I had. I left him there three years, and then put him upon good behaviour about my person. He is a man of strict truth, he no longer drinks or games; I need not say, after the first attribute (truth), that he is scrupulously honest. His attention and attachment to me resemble more those of a mother to a child, or rather a lover to his mistress, than a servant's to a master. I have nearly reformed his father from drinking. (a) I lock up nothing from my servants at home but ardent spirits, not wine or porter or sugar or coffee, etc. Hetty keeps my smoke-house and other keys. I don't believe that she, or her daughter Nancy, now dead, wronged me of a pin. They, as well as John, are truly religious. But——, like his master, 'has none to speak of.' The same was the character of his sister. No cant, no groaning, and sighing, and hymn-singing. I am at the end of my paper. Essex, Queen and Juba are likewise trustworthy. They never take, *i. e.* steal anything."<sup>1</sup>

In the preceding pages of this book we have more than once referred to Mammy Aggy, who had been the maid of Randolph's mother, but had afterwards become attached to the family of Judge Coalter. Nothing could be more characteristic of the Slave Era than the place which this woman occupied in Randolph's affections. Few names recur oftener than hers in his letters to his niece. "My love to mammy. God bless you, my dear," were the concluding words of one of them.<sup>2</sup> When his

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 19, 1828, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Jan. 31, 1824, Bryan MSS.

niece, who had recently received an injury to her foot, writes to him that she cannot get the information which she would like to get from Mammy about his Aunt Murray, he simply cannot understand it, and goes off into a long genealogical excursion, for the purpose of refreshing Mammy's waning memory.

"Mammy," he declared, "must have lost her momery, if she has forgotten Aunt Murray, the mother of Cousin Billy Murray and of Mrs. David and of Mrs. Tom Gordon."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Talk to her of Athol (pronounced Aw-thol), of Grove Brook, where your dear mother had spent many a hospitable day; of that family, Nancy, now Mrs. Dr. Robinson, Rebecca, Martha, Polly Skipwith; of Polly Murray (Mrs. Edm. Harrison), whose mother, James Murray's widow, married Jerman Baker, of Archer's Hill, by whom she had the late treasurer and Jack Baker; of Mrs. John Murray, one of whose daughters married The. Ruffin; of Mrs. Davis, mother of Peggy Goode, who married Mr. Knox; of Mrs. Tom Gordon, mother of Nancy Gordon, who married Col. Henry E. Coleman, of Halifax. She died in 1824, while I was in England. Pray give the foot time—only healer when the (foot) hath bled."<sup>1</sup>

Several other letters from Randolph to his niece make it apparent that he was a sort of nexus between Mammy Aggy and the older Randolph negroes at Roanoke.

"I write only," he wrote on one occasion to his niece, "to prove to you the value that I set upon your correspondence, and to gratify Mammy's laudable curiosity respecting her kinsfolk in this quarter of the country. Essex, whom she more particularly names, has been quite well until yesterday. His indisposition is slight, the consequence of not adapting his dress to the late sudden change in the weather. Hetty, Nancy, Johnny, and Juba are well and all of my out people—uncommonly so."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Washington, Feb. 25, 1829, Bryan MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Roanoke, Sept. 26, 1823, Dr. R. B. Carmichael MSS.

An institution, under which the kindest master might, by the loss of his reason, be converted into a harsh and tyrannical one, without any escape for the slave from his lot, was an institution not easily defended, even at its best; but, after closely going over the relations of Randolph to his slaves, before the milk of human kindness in his breast had been curdled by insane impulses and delusions, we can readily understand how his neighbor and friend, John Marshall, could have testified in the Randolph will litigation: "His slaves were very much attached to him; they almost worshipped him."<sup>1</sup>

If Randolph was unkind to anybody on his plantations, it was not to his slaves, but to his overseers. His relations with some of them were far from being either trustful or friendly. If there was good reason for this, it was probably because his frequent absence from home gave unusual point in his case to the saying that the eye of the master is worth both hands of the servant. The salary usually paid by him to one of his overseers appears to have been \$400.00 or \$500.00, per annum<sup>2</sup>; but, of course, many perquisites went along with this salary, which made it a much larger one in fact than in terms of money. More than once in his life Randolph formed the idea that it was considerably increased by dishonest practices.

"In answer to your most kind and flattering questions," he once wrote to Josiah Quincy, "I must tell you that *it is so* because a Southern proprietor is a poor devil and his overseer a prince. I had to discard one the other day for malversation and peculation in office—a small affair compared with what we wot of in the 'great vulgar and the small' in the city of O, [Washington] and its dependencies. I wish you could have heard two worthy neighbors cautioning me against a contest at law with *an overseer* as a 'tremendous business,' where,

<sup>1</sup> Coalter's Exor. *vs.* Randolph's Exor., Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.

<sup>2</sup> J. R.'s Diary.

whatever may be the merits of the case, the employer is sure to be cast.' I knew, too, that they were right."<sup>1</sup>

In one place in the Diary, Randolph speaks of "Palmer's villainy"; and it really does look as if this overseer was far from being everything that he should have been. In one of his letters, Randolph says in that academic diction which sat upon him as naturally as he sat upon a saddle, that another overseer of his is *in meditatione fugæ* to Tennessee.

The rough manner in which he handled one of his overseers, named Pentecost, who had incurred his displeasure, has been told by Henry Carrington in a manner which gives us a sharpened insight into the seamy side of plantation life:

"In the above mentioned year, Mr. Randolph failed in his supply of tobacco plants at his lower quarter, where a man by the name of P. [Pentecost] was overseer. About the first of July, he ascertained that he could get plants from Colonel C., in Halifax. He wrote to P. to take a boat belonging to the estate, cross the river to Colonel C.'s, get the plants, and plant his crop.

"Some two days afterwards, he learned that the overseer had not obeyed the order. He was aroused. He wrote to me to meet him on the estate at nine o'clock next day. On going to the place, according to his appointment, I found him on the ground, and also Colonel C., Captain W., Captain J. S., and Mr. A. G. He proposed to us to ride with him over the estate and view the condition of the crops. We found everything in bad order; the tobacco ground particularly out of order for planting.

"After consuming some hours in the survey, he conducted us to the granary. There were gathered together the plantation implements of every description, and, in the midst, were standing two negro girls, each with a mulatto child in her arms. The assemblage was remarkable, and I anxiously

<sup>1</sup> Roanoke, Oct. 18, 1813, *Life of Quincy*, 338.

expected a scene. He enquired of the girls where was P. They said that, after collecting the various articles then in our view, he disappeared.

“Mr. Randolph said he had ordered him also to be present; but he disobeyed because he could not stand the ordeal to which he was to be subjected. Then, turning to Mr. G., a plain but respectable citizen, who had some years before, acted as steward for Mr. Randolph, he said: ‘I have invited you herewith today, Mr. G., to make to you publicly, in the presence of these gentlemen, all the reparation in my power for the great injury I have done you.’

“Mr. G. seemed greatly startled. He assured Mr. Randolph that there was no occasion for explanation; that he had always treated him very well.

“‘Sir,’ replied Mr. Randolph, ‘you are greatly mistaken. For more than a year past, I have endeavored to show by my bearing towards you, my disgust with you and my contempt for your character. But I am undeceived. This fellow, P., had induced me to believe that you were the father of the children now before us. But, I now know that he, P., has carried on the intercourse which he charges upon you, and that these are his children.’

“Never was man more astonished than was Mr. G. He reiterated,—‘Never, Mr. Randolph, was there a greater lie.’

\* \* \* Mr. Randolph all the time assuring him that he knew that he had wronged him, and, therefore, he was anxious to make the most ample apology and reparation.

“He then turned to the gentlemen present, and said: ‘Look at these girls; they are my crop hands. See how their heads are combed; how oily their hair. Do they look like they had stood blasts of Winter or Summer’s sun? No, Sirs; they have been in his harem.’

“The scene was highly dramatic; the acting, if it could be so regarded, unsurpassed.

“After this scene at the granary, Mr. Randolph proposed to us to go to the house, and get some fresh water. Mrs. P. brought us the water. Mr. Randolph, in our presence, said to her, he was aware of the infidelity of her husband, and felt for her the deepest compassion.



“Mr. P. had, in the meantime, taken himself to some house in the neighborhood, where, from great perturbation of spirit, he fell ill. Mr. Randolph sent for a lawyer, and instituted several suits against him. But, hearing that he was seriously ill, his feelings relented. He told me it did not become him, a professing Christian, to persecute the man to death. ‘I must go and see him,’ said he; and he did so, with the hope of curing and relieving him.

“He told P. that he must not let this difficulty depress him; that the suits he had ordered against him must be prosecuted to judgment, as an example to his successors, but that no execution should be issued.

“Mr. Randolph asked him what he intended to do. Mr. P. told him he wished to move west. Mr. Randolph asked him if he had money for the purpose. Mr. P. replied, he had not; but that he proposed selling the negro boy who waited on him. Mr. Randolph asked the price. Five hundred dollars, was the reply. Thereupon, Mr. Randolph agreed to purchase the boy, and paid the price.”<sup>1</sup>

According to the details of this transaction, given by one of Randolph’s journals, when he heard that Pentecost was dying he went to his house, and found him in a state of hysteria, and, subsequently, after first writing a long bill in chancery, so as to provide for every contingency, like Sydney Smith, when he took along with him to the bedside of his ill parishioner both the Collects for the Sick and a bottle of castor oil, visited him again, and bought from him his boy Moses, with a view to accelerating his hegira from Roanoke.<sup>2</sup>

But all of Randolph’s overseers were by no means Palmers or Pentecosts. It was a saying of Charles Bruce, the Charlotte County planter, to whom we have more than once referred, that it was easier to secure a hundred good hands than one good overseer; and, taken as a whole,

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 126.

<sup>2</sup> Libr. Cong.



the man, who occupied the position of overseer on a large Virginia plantation, however illiterate he might be, was usually endowed to a greater degree than most men with the three elements that make up that rare thing—executive ability; namely, justice, kindness, and firmness.

What Randolph thought of the faithful, capable Curd, whom he nursed so tenderly under his own roof, the reader has already been told. And another one of his overseers, Cumby by name, was held in equally high esteem by him. "Cumby can do anything," he was in the habit of saying. One day, he said, he and Cumby were riding over Roanoke when they came to a frame house, which drew from him the remark that he wished that he could have it for a store-house. Two days afterwards, the house walked up (to use his expression) into his yard; with everything complete except the chimneys. On another occasion, according to Randolph, Cumby built a barn, when he was absent from Roanoke. When he returned, he told him that it was in the right place but that it was set wrong, and should have been set on a north and south line. The next day, when he rode by it, he found that it had been turned entirely around by Cumby, and he was so pleased that he gave it the name of the "turn-around barn," which it ever afterwards bore.<sup>1</sup>

On one occasion Randolph was told by Palmer that he was "too tight with him"; that is, to adopt Randolph's translation of these words, would not permit him to encroach beyond the terms of his contract with him; and this Randolph set down as a piece of impertinence.

But he knew when to relax as well as to tighten the reins with his overseers, and we learn from Jacob Harvey that he expressed a strong feeling of respect for a favorite overseer who had declined to adopt a new-fangled plan of planting tobacco, which he had picked up at Washington. Randolph, or "Mr. *Randall*," as this overseer was in the

<sup>1</sup> Bouldin, 102.

habit of calling him, bowed his neck in submission, although he was told flatly by the man that, notwithstanding the respect that he had for the opinions of "Mr. *Randall*" on all other subjects but tobacco planting, he would plant tobacco in his own way or not at all. The result, Randolph said, was a great crop.<sup>1</sup>

In concluding what we have had to say about Roanoke, it may interest the reader to know that this was a list of topics which Randolph once, when at Washington, asked Dr. Dudley to cover in his next letter from Roanoke, in the order in which he mentioned them:

"Your own affair—Ca.—Cl.—Plantation affairs generally—Essex and Hetty—Nancy, etc.,—Pheasants—Partridges—Summer ducks—Fruit Trees—Sir Archy Colt—and Phillis—Blood stock generally—Tobacco—."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The New Mirror*, v. 1, 353.

<sup>2</sup> Washington, Feb. 7, 1820, *Letters to a Y. R.*, 212.

## CHAPTER X

### Conclusion

In conclusion, we cannot refrain from dwelling for a moment upon the profound change which has taken place since Randolph's death in the District, so long and so conspicuously represented by him in Congress. The face of nature in it has, it is true, undergone but little alteration. The willow-fringed Staunton still flows by Roanoke, through silent solitudes for the most part, to Clarks-ville, where it receives the waters of the Dan, hurrying to their tryst with its own current. The general appearance of the country between the James and the Roanoke is still that of a single vast forest, invaded at intervals by the axe and the plow, and traversed here and there by common dirt roads, half lost to sight in its leafy recesses. All species of wild game are not as abundant in this region as when Randolph jotted down his bags of partridges and woodcock, and the number of Dido's last litter in the Diary; but even such a shy thing as the wild turkey still haunts its glades and plant patches, and, in at least one of its streams, within recent years, the beaver, that curious artisan of the primæval wilderness, has been known to rear its rude structures. In the absence of a diversified industry, the people of Randolph's former District still believe, as Randolph believed, that their best resource is the tobacco plant.

But, in all political and social respects, how radically transformed has this region become since 1833! The

freehold suffrage, but for which Randolph's career would hardly have been possible, was abolished by the adoption of the Virginia State Constitution of 1850, and was succeeded by the universal white suffrage, which he so deeply distrusted. After the Civil War, under circumstances, which would have seemed to him the complete fulfillment of his worst forebodings of federal tyranny, this suffrage was so enlarged as to include first black as well as white men, and then both white and black women. To Randolph the extension of the suffrage to the negro and the female sex would have been, it is safe to say, only less monstrous than its extension to his horse, Gracchus, or to his dog, Carlo. The landed gentry, which controlled the county governments in his District, and imparted vivid life and color to the character of the latter, has passed away, with its frank, engaging, generous, and spirited manners; its love of the horse, the hound, and the gun; its numerous servants, its profuse tables, its doors that, like those of Timon of Athens, "were ne'er acquainted with their wards." A few weeks ago, the author left the house in Charlotte County, which was once the home of one of the wealthiest slave owners of Virginia; then teeming with servants and lavishly blest with all the essentials of abundant and joyous living; but now a mere vacant, deserted anachronism; and, as he looked back from a lower level on its lonely towers and battlements, his imagination experienced no difficulty in picturing it as some huge marine fossil left stranded upon its high seat by the recession of some prehistoric sea.

Thousands of steady, moral, God-fearing inhabitants reside in the four counties which Randolph represented, and, in many respects, they are better qualified than the members of the class, of which we have been speaking, would be to bring about the industrial change, which is steadily giving a wholly new aspect to parts of the face of North Carolina, and is bound, sooner or later, to make

its influence generally felt in all Southside Virginia. But in point of social characteristics and tastes, these individuals are, as a rule, far removed from the inmates of the country seats in Charlotte, Prince Edward, Buckingham, and Cumberland Counties, which were so often visited by Randolph in the early part of the 19th century. Yet the renown of Randolph, the most famous Virginian ever born below the James, will unquestionably continue to be one of the most cherished possessions, not only of the people of his former District, but of all Virginia; for, despite the sharp social distinctions of the past, the people of Virginia, as geographically limited to-day, are, and always have been, a highly homogeneous one. We make the prediction that we do, not because Virginia is disposed to place Randolph upon a pedestal of such exalted prominence as has been sometimes affirmed by bigoted writers. When she came to fill the niggard space in Statuary Hall at the National Capitol, tendered to her rich abundance, she did not turn to any Virginian, of whom it can be said, as it can be truthfully said, in a limited sense, of him; that he was exclusively hers, but to Washington and Lee, of whom one would but mock her, if he were to say that they were hers only. In the future, doubtless, with the exception of the fame of Jefferson, the most illustrious exemplar, perhaps, of the democratic movement, which has been the most permanent and irresistible movement in human history, the fame of no native Virginian is so likely to be lasting as that of Washington and Marshall, who, lifted by their serene balance of character and breadth of view and sympathy above the sectional jealousies and discords of their age, always kept their eyes steadily fixed upon no vision less splendid than that of One People and One Destiny, to which the stride of great events, since the conclusion of the Civil War has happily brought every portion of the United States.

But Virginia cannot forget that there was another time

in her history when the wisest and best man, within her borders, might well have doubted whether his paramount allegiance was to her or to the ill-defined union created by the Federal Constitution; indeed, when an overwhelming majority of her people, influenced by the inexorable course of events, decided that question, though most reluctantly, in favor of her sovereignty, and gave all that men can honorably give—Peace, Wealth, and Life—to make their decision good. Remembering these things, Virginia will always hold John Randolph of Roanoke in grateful remembrance; retaining ineffaceably in her memory in the future, as in the past, the recollection of his unique presence; his unfaltering intrepidity; his bitter sorrows and misfortunes; his brilliant rhetorical, literary, and social gifts; his searching flashes of prescience and reasoning; his high public motives; his scorn for the muck-worms and scavengers of prostituted politics, and, above all, his unceasing constancy in the maintenance of what his native State conceived that her honor and interests required. Nor, now that the veil has been completely withdrawn from his private life, will Virginia fail to bear in mind, too, his heart far more sensitive, after all, despite a morbidly high-strung nature and tragic intervals of mental aberration, to the tenderest impulses of human love and pity than to those of human passion, arrogance, and hatred.

And more and more, in the future, it can be confidently predicted, will it be realized by every part of the United States that, with respect to Randolph also, it may be said that it is upon the poet, after all, that the true gift of divination has been bestowed:

“Bard, Sage and Tribune! in himself  
 All moods of mind contrasting;—  
 The tenderest wail of human woe  
 The scorn like lightning blasting;

**John Randolph of Roanoke**

The pathos which from rival eyes  
Unwilling tears could summon;  
The stinging taunt, the fiery burst  
Of hatred scarcely human;—  
Mirth sparkling like a diamond shower  
From lips of life-long sadness;  
Clear picturings of majestic thought  
Upon a ground of madness;  
And, over all, romance and song  
A classic beauty throwing,  
And laurelled Clio at his side  
Her storied pages showing.”

(WHITTIER.)

## APPENDIX

“At Washington, I learned the result of the dispatches brought by the John Adams (a name of evil omen), and there rumors were afloat, which have since gathered strength, of a disposition in Massachusetts, and, indeed, throughout New England, to follow the example of Nantucket, and declare for a neutrality in the present contest with Great Britain. I will not believe it. What! Boston, the cradle of American Independence, to whose aid Virginia, stepped forth unsolicited, when the whole vengeance of the British ministry was wreaked on that devoted town. Boston! now to desert us, in our utmost need; to give up her old ally to ravage, at the price of her own impunity from the common enemy?—I cannot, will not, believe it. The men, if any such there be among you, who venture to insinuate such an intent by the darkest innuendo, do they claim to be the disciples of Washington? They are of the school of Arnold. I am not insensible to the vexations and oppression, with which you have been harassed, with little intermission, since the memorable embargo of 1807. These I am disposed, as you well know, neither to excuse, nor to extenuate. Perhaps, I may be reminded of an authority, to which I always delight to refer, ‘*Segnius irritant animos, etc.*,’ but let me tell such gentlemen that our sufferings, under political quacks of our own calling in, are not matter of *hearsay*. It is true they are considered by the unhappy, misguided patient as evidence of the potency, and consequently (according to his system of logic) of the efficacy, of the medicine, as well as the inveteracy, of the disease. It is not less true that this last has become, from preposterous treatment, in the highest degree, alarming. The patient himself begins to suspect



something of the sort, and the doctors trembling, each for his own character, are quarrelling and calling hard names among themselves. But they have reduced us to such a condition that nothing short of the knife will now do. 'We must *fight*, Mr. Speaker!' said Patrick Henry in 1775, when his sagacious mind saw there was nothing else left for us but manly resistance or slavish submission; and his tongue dared to utter what his heart suggested. How much greater the necessity now, when our country is regarded not as a property to be recovered, and therefore spared, so far as is compatible with the end in view, but as an object of vengeance, of desolation.

You know my sentiments of the men at the head of our affairs, and of the general course of administration during the last eight years. You know also that the relation, in which I stand towards them, is one of my own deliberate choice; sanctioned not more by my judgment than by my feelings. You, who have seen men, in the ranks, when I commanded in chief in the House of Representatives, and others, at that time too green to be on the political muster roll, whose names had never been pronounced out of their own parish, raised to the highest offices. You, who are thoroughly acquainted with the whole progress of my separation from the party, with which I was once connected in conduct, do not require to be told, that 'there was a time in which I stood in such favor in the closet that there must have been something extravagantly unreasonable in my wishes, if they might not *ALL* have been gratified.' But I must acknowledge that you have seen instances of apostasy, among your quondam political associates, as well as my own, that might almost justify a suspicion that I, too, tired of holding out, may wish to make my peace with the administration by adding one more item 'to the long catalogue of venality from Esau to the present day.' Should such a shade of suspicion pass across your mind I can readily excuse it, in consideration of the common frailty of our nature, from which I claim no peculiar exemption, and the transcendent wickedness of the times we live in; but you will have given me credit for a talent which I do not possess. I am master of no such ambidexterity; and, were I to attempt this game, which it is only for adepts (not novices) to play, I am thor-

oughly conscious that, like other bungling rogues, I should at once expose my knavery and miss my object. Not that our Political Church refuses to open her arms to the vilest of heretics and sinners, who can seal their abjuration of their old faith by the prosecution of the brethren with whom they held and professed it; but I know that my nerves are of too weak a fibre to hear the question ordinary and extraordinary from our political inquisitors. I can sustain with composure and even with indifference the rancorous hatred of the numerous enemies, whom it has been my lot to make in the course of my unprosperous life, but I have not yet steeled myself to endure the contemptuous pity of those noble and high-minded men whom I glory to call my friends; and I am on too bad terms with the world to encounter my own self-disrespect.

You may however very naturally ask why I have chosen you for the object of this address? Why I have not rather selected some one of those political friends, whom I have yet found 'faithful among the faithless,' as the vehicle of my opinions? It is because the avenue to the public ear is shut against me in Virginia, and I have been flattered to believe that the sound of my voice may reach New England. Nay, that it would be heard there, not without attention and respect. With us, the press is under a virtual *imprimatur*, and it would be more easy, at this time, to force into circulation the Treasury notes than opinions militating against the administration through the press in Virginia. We were indeed, beginning to open our eyes in spite of the opiate with which we were drugged by the newspapers and the busy hum of the insects, that bask in the sunshine of court patronage, when certain events occurred, the most favorable that could have happened for our rulers; whose 'luck,' verifying the proverb, is in the inverse ratio of their wisdom; or, perhaps, I ought to say who have the cunning to take advantage of glaring acts of indiscretion in their adversaries at home and abroad, as these may affect the public mind; and such have never failed to come to their relief, when otherwise their case would have been hopeless. I give you the most serious assurance that nothing less than the shameful conduct of the enemy and the complexion of certain occurrences to the Eastward would have

sustained Mr. Madison after the disgraceful affair at Washington. The public indignation would have overwhelmed, in one common ruin, himself and his hireling newspapers. The artillery of the press, so long the instrument of our subjugation, would, as at Paris, have been turned against the destroyer of his country. When we are told that Old England says he 'shall,' and New England that he 'must,' retire from office, as the price of peace with the one, and of union with the other, we have too much English blood in our veins to submit to this dictation, or to any thing in the form of a threat. Neither of these people know any thing of us. The ignorance of her foreign agents, not only of the country, to which they are sent, but even of their own, has exposed England to general derision. She will learn, when it is too late, that we are a high-minded people, attached to our liberty and our country, because it is free, in a degree inferior to no people under the sun. She will discover that 'our trade would have been worth more than our spoil,' and that she has made deadly enemies of a whole people, who, in spite of her and of the world, of the sneers of her sophists, or of the force of her arms, are destined to become, within the present (century?) a mighty nation. It belongs to New England to say whether she will constitute a portion, an important and highly respectable portion, of this nation, or whether she will dwindle into that state of insignificant, nominal independence, which is the precarious curse of the minor kingdoms of Europe. A separation made in the fulness of time, the effect of amicable arrangements, may prove mutually beneficial to both parties. Such would have been the effect of American independence, if the British ministry would have listened to any suggestion but that of their own impotent rage; but a settled hostility, embittered by the keenest recollections, must be the result of a disunion between you and us, under the present circumstances. I have sometimes wished that Mr. Madison (who endeavored to thwart the wise and benevolent policy of General Washington 'to regard the English like other nations, as enemies in war, in peace friends') had succeeded in embroiling us with the Court of St. James twenty years sooner. We should in that case have had the Father of his Country to conduct the war and

to make the peace; and that peace would have endured beyond the lifetime of the authors of their country's calamity and disgrace. But I must leave past recollections. The present and the immediate future claim our attention.

It may be said that in time of peace the people of every portion of our Confederacy find themselves too happy to think of division; that the sufferings of a war like this are requisite to rouse them to the necessary exertion. War is incident to all governments; and wars, I very much fear, will be wickedly declared and weakly waged even by the New England Confederacy, as they have been by every government (not even excepting the Roman Republic) of which we have any knowledge; and it does appear to me no slight presumption that the evil has not yet reached the point of amputation when Peace alone will render us the happiest (as we are the freest) people under the sun—at least too happy to think of dissolving the Union, which, as it carried us through the War of our Revolution, will, I trust, bear us triumphant through that in which we have been plunged by the incapacity and corruption of men, neither willing to maintain the relations of peace nor able to conduct the operations of war. Should I, unhappily, be mistaken in this expectation, let us see what are to be the consequences of the separation, not to us but to yourselves. An exclusion of your tonnage and manufactures from our ports and harbors [will be one?] It will be our policy to encourage our own or even those of Europe in preference to yours; a policy more obvious than that which induced us of the South to consent to discriminating duties in favor of American tonnage, in the infancy of this Government. It is unnecessary to say to you that I embrace the duties on imports, as well as the tonnage duty, when I allude to the encouragement of American shipping. It will always be our policy to prevent your obtaining a naval superiority, and consequently to cut you off entirely from our carrying trade. The same plain interest will cause us to prefer any manufactures to your own. The intercourse with the rest of the world, that exchanges our surplus for theirs, will be the nursery of our seamen. In the Middle States you will find rivals not very heartily indisposed to shut out the competition of your shipping. In the same

section of country, and in the boundless West, you will find jealous competitors of your mechanics. You will be left to settle, as you can, with England, the question of boundary on the side of New Brunswick; and, unless you can bring New York to a state of utter blindness as to her own interests, that great, thriving, and most populous member of the Southern Confederacy will present a hostile frontier to the only States of the Union of Hartford that can be estimated as of any efficiency. Should that respectable city be chosen as the seat of the Eastern Congress, that body will sit within two days' march of the most populous county of New York (Dutchess), of itself almost equal to some of the New England States. I speak not in derision but in soberness and sadness of heart. Rather let me say that, like a thoroughbred diplomatist, I try to suppress everything like feeling, and treat this question as a dry matter of calculation; well knowing at the same time, that, in this, as in every question, of vital interest, 'our passions instruct our reason.' The same high authority has told us that Jacobinism is of no country; that it is a sect found in all. Now, as our Jacobins in Virginia would be very glad to hear of the bombardment of Boston, so, I very much fear, your Jacobins would not be very sorry to hear of a servile insurrection in Virginia. But such I trust is the general feeling in neither country; otherwise I should at once agree that Union, like the marriages of Mezentius, was the worst that could befall us. For, with every other man of common sense, I have always regarded Union as the means of liberty and safety; in other words of happiness, and not as an end, to which these are to be sacrificed. Neither, at the same time, are means so precious, so efficient (in proper hands) [for?] these desirable objects, to be thrown, rashly aside, because, in the hands of bad men, they have been made the instrument almost of our undoing.

You in New England (it is unnecessary I hope to specify when I *do not* address myself personally to yourself) are very wide of the mark, if you suppose we to the South do not suffer at least as much as yourselves from the incapacity of our rulers to conduct the defence of the country. Do you ask why we do not change those rulers? I reply, because we are a people, like your own Connecticut, of steady habits. Our

confidence, once given, is not hastily withdrawn. Let those who will abuse the fickleness of the People; I shall say such is not the character of the People of Virginia. They may be deceived, but they are honest. Taking advantage of their honest prejudices, the growth of our Revolution, fostered not more by Mr. Jefferson than by the injuries and (what is harder to be borne) the insults of the British ministry, since the Peace of 1783 a combination of artful men has, with the aid of the Press, and the possession of the machinery of government (a powerful engine in any hands) led them to the brink of ruin. I can never bring myself to believe that the whole mass of the landed proprietors in any country, but especially such a country as Virginia, can seriously plot its ruin. Our Government is in the hands of the landed proprietors only. The very men, of whom you complain, have left nothing undone that *they* dared to do in order to destroy it. Foreign influence is unknown among us. What we feel of it is, through the medium of the General Government, which, acted on itself by foreign renegadoes, serves as a conductor between them and us of this pernicious influence. I know of no foreigner who has been, or is, in any respectable office in the gift of the People, or in the Government of Virginia. No member of either House of Congress, no leading member of our Assembly, no judge of our Supreme Courts [is such a person?] Of the newspapers printed in the State, as far as my knowledge extends, without discrimination of party they are conducted by native Virginians. Like yourselves, we are an unmixed people. I know the prejudice that exists against us, nor do I wonder at it, considering the gross ignorance on the subject that prevails north of Maryland, and even in many parts of that neighboring state.

What member of the Confederacy has sacrificed more on the altar of public good than Virginia? Whence did the General Government derive its lands beyond the Ohio, then and now almost the only source of revenue? From our grant,—a grant so curiously worded, and by our present Palinurus too, as to except ourselves, by its limitations, from the common benefit.

By its conditions, it was forbidden ground to us, and thereby



the foundation was laid of incurable animosity and division between the States on each side of that great natural boundary, the river Ohio. Not only their masters, but the very slaves themselves, for whose benefit this regulation was made, were sacrificed by it. Dispersion is to them a bettering of their present condition, and of their chance for emancipation. It is only when this can be done without danger and without ruinous individual loss that it will be done at all. But what is common sense to a political Quixote?

That country was ours by a double title, by charter and by conquest. George Rogers Clark, the American Hannibal, at the head of the State troops, by the reduction of Post Vincennes obtained the lakes for our northern boundary at the Peace of Paris. The march of that great man and his brave companions in arms across the drowned lands of the Wabash does not shrink from a comparison with the passage of the Thrasy-mene Marsh. Without meaning anything like an invidious distinction, I have not heard of any cession from Massachusetts of her vast wilds; and Connecticut has had the address, out of our grant to the *firm*, to obtain, on her own private account, some millions of acres; whilst we, yes we (I blush to say it) have descended to beg for a pittance out of the property once our own for the brave men by whose valor it had been won, and whom heedless profusion had disabled us to recompense. We met the just fate of the prodigal. We were spurned from the door, where once we were master, with derision and scorn; and yet we hear of undue Virginian influence. This fund yielded the Government, when I had connection with it, from half a million to eight hundred thousand dollars annually. It would have preserved us from the imposition of State taxes, founded schools, built bridges and made roads and canals throughout Virginia. It was squandered away in a single donative at the instance of Mr. Madison. For the sake of concord with our neighbors, by the same generous but misguided policy, we ceded to Pennsylvania Fort Pitt, a most important commercial and military position, and a vast domain around it, as much Virginia as the city of Richmond and the county of Henrico. To Kentucky, the eldest daughter of the Union, the Virginia of the West, we have

yielded on a question of boundary, from a similar consideration. Actuated by the same magnanimous spirit, at the instance of other States, with the exception of New York, North Carolina and Rhode Island, we accepted in 1783 the present Constitution. It was repugnant to our judgment, and fraught, as we feared, with danger to our liberties. The awful voice of our ablest and soundest statesmen, of Patrick Henry and of George Mason, never before or since disregarded, warned us of the consequences. Neither was their counsel entirely unheeded; for it led to important subsequent amendments of that instrument. I have always believed this disinterested spirit, so often manifested by us, to be one of the chief causes of the influence which we have exercised over the other States. Eight States having made that Constitution their own, we submitted to the yoke for the sake of union. Our attachment to the Union is not an empty profession. It is demonstrated by our practice at home. No sooner was the Convention of 1788 dissolved than the feuds of federalism and anti-federalism disappeared. I speak of their effects on our councils. For the sake of union we submitted to the lowest state of degradation—the administration of John Adams. The name of this man calls up contempt and derision, wheresoever it is pronounced. To the fantastic vanity of this political Malvolio may be distinctly traced our present unhappy condition. I will not be so ungenerous as to remind you that this personage, of whom and his addresses and his answers I defy you to think without a bitter smile, was not a Virginian, but I must, in justice to ourselves, insist in making him a set-off against Mr. Madison. They are of such equal weight that the trembling balance reminds us of that passage of Pope where Jove weighs the beau's wits against the lady's hair!

‘The doubtful beam long nods from side to side,  
At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.’

Intoxicated not more by the fulsome adulation with which he was plied than by the fumes of his own vanity, this poor old gentleman saw a visionary coronet suspended over his brow and an airdrawn sceptre, ‘the handle towards his hand,’ which,



attempting to clutch, he lost his balance, and disappeared, never to rise again. He it was who, 'enacting' Nat. Lee's Alexander, raved about the People of Virginia as 'a faction, to be humbled in dust and ashes,' when the sackcloth already was prepared for his own back.

But I am spinning out this letter to too great a length. What is your object? PEACE? Can this be attained on any terms whilst England sees a prospect of disuniting that Confederacy which has already given so deep a blow to her maritime pride, and threatens at no very distant day to dispute with her the empire of the ocean? The wound, which our gallant tars have inflicted on her tenderest point, has maddened her to rage. Cursed as we are with a weak and wicked administration, she can no longer despise us. Already she begins to hate us; and she seeks to glut a revenge, as impotent as it is rancorous, by inroads that would have disgraced the buccaneers, and bulletins that would only not disgrace the sovereign of Elba. She already is compelled to confess in her heart what her lips deny, that, if English bull-dogs, and gamecocks degenerate on our soil, English MEN do not; and should (which God forbid) our brethren of the East desert us in this contest for all that is precious to Man, we will maintain it, so long as our proud and insulting foe shall refuse to accede to equitable terms of peace. The Government will then pass into proper hands, the talents of the country will be called forth, and the schemes of moon-struck philosophers and their disciples pass away and 'leave not a rack behind.'

You know how, steady and persevering, I endeavored for eight years to counteract the artful and insidious plans of our rulers to embroil us with the country of our ancestors, and the odium which I have thereby drawn upon myself. Believing it to be my duty to soften as much as possible the asperities, which subsisted between the two countries, and which were leading to a ruinous war, I put to hazard, nay, exposed to almost certain destruction, an influence such as no man, perhaps, in this country, at the same age, had ever before attained. (The popularity that dreads exposure is too delicate for public service. It is a bastard species. The true

sort will stand the hardest frosts.) Is it my fault, as Mr. Burke complained of the crowned heads of Europe, that England will no longer suffer me to find palliatives for her conduct? No man admired more than I did her magnanimous stand against the tyrant, before whom all the rest of Christendom at one time bowed. No man, not even her own Wilberforce and Perceval, put up more sincere prayers for her deliverance. In the remotest isle of Australasia, my sympathy would have been enlisted, in such a contest, for the descendants of Alfred, and Bacon, and Shakespeare, and Milton, and Locke, on whom I love to look back as my illustrious countrymen. In any contest, I should have taken side with Liberty; but on this depended (as I believed and do still believe) all that made my own country dear in my sight. It is past, and, unmindful of the mercy of that protecting Providence, which has carried her through the valley of the shadow of death, England 'feels power and forgets right.' I am not one of the whining set of people who cry out against mine adversary for the force of his blow. England has, unquestionably, as good a right to conquer us as we have to conquer Canada; the same right that we have to conquer England, and with about as good prospect of success. But let not her orators declaim against the enormity of French principles when she permits herself to arm and discipline our slaves, and to lead them into the field against their masters, in the hope of exciting by the example a general insurrection, and thus render Virginia another St. Domingo. And does she talk of Jacobinism? What is this but Jacobinism? and of the vilest stamp? Is this the country that has abolished the slave trade? that has made that infamous, inhuman traffic a felony? that feeds with the bread of life all who hunger after it, and even those who, but for her, would never have known their perishing condition? Drunk with the cup of the abomination of Moloch, they have been roused from the sleep of death, like some benighted traveller perishing in the snows, and warmed into life by the beams of the only true religion. Is this the country of Wilberforce and Howard? It is; but, like my own, my native land, it has fallen into the hands of evil men, who pour out its treasure and its blood at the shrine of their own guilty ambition. And this impious

sacrifice they celebrate amidst the applauses of the deluded people, and even of the victims themselves.

There is a proneness in mankind to throw the blame of their sufferings on any one but themselves. In this manner, Virginia, is regarded by some of her sister States; not adverting to the fact that all (Connecticut and Delaware excepted) are responsible for the measures that have involved us in our present difficulties. Did we partition your State into those unequal and monstrous districts which have given birth to a new word in your language, of uncouth sound, calling up the most odious associations? Did we elect the Jacobins whom you sent to both Houses of Congress, the Bidwells, and Gannetts, and Skinners, to spur on the more moderate men from Virginia to excesses which they reluctantly gave into at the time, and have since been ashamed of? Who hurried the bill suspending the privilege of the writ of HABEAS CORPUS through a trembling servile Senate, in consequence, as he did not blush to state, of a *verbal* communication from the President? A Senator from Massachusetts, and professor in her venerable university. In short, have not your first statesmen (such I believe was the reputation of the gentleman in question at the time), your richest merchants, and the majority of your delegation in Congress vied in support of the men and the measures that have led to our present suffering and humiliated condition?

If you wished to separate yourselves from us, you had ample provocation, in time of peace, in an embargo, the most unconstitutional and oppressive; an engine of tyranny, fraud, and favoritism. Then was the time to resist (we did not desert England in a time of war), but you were then under the dominion of a faction among yourselves, yet a formidable minority, exhibiting no signs of diminution; and it is not the least of my apprehensions, from certain proceedings to the eastward, that they may be made the means of consigning you again, and for ever, to the same low, insolent domination. The reaction of your Jacobins upon us (for although we have some in Virginia, they are few and insignificant) through the men at Washington ('who must conciliate good republicans,') is dreadful. Pause, I beseech you, pause! You tread on the brink of

destruction. Of all the Atlantic States, you have the least cause to complain. Your manufactures, and the trade which the enemy has allowed you, have drained us of our last dollar. How then can we carry on the war? With men and steel, stout hearts and willing hands, and these from the days of Darius and Xerxes, in defence of the household gods of freedom have proved a match for gold. Can they not now encounter paper? We shall suffer much from this contest; it will cut deep; but, dismissing its authors from our confidence and councils for ever (I speak of a few leaders and their immediate tools, not of the deluded, as well in as out of authority), we shall pass, if it be the good pleasure of Him, whose curses are tempered with mercies, through an agony and bloody sweat, to peace and salvation; to that peace which is only to be found in a reconciliation with Him. 'Atheists and madmen *have* been our lawgivers,' and when I think on our past conduct I shudder at the chastisement that may await us. How has not Europe suffered for her sins! Will England not consider, that, like the man who but yesterday bestrode the narrow world, she is but an instrument in his hands who breaketh the weapons of his chastisement, when the measure of his people's punishment is full?

When I exhort to further patience; to resort to constitutional means of redress only, I know that there is such a thing as tyranny as well as oppression; and that there is no government, however restricted in its power, that may not, by abuse, under pretext of exercise of its constitutional authority, drive its unhappy subjects to desperation. Our situation is indeed awful. The members of the Union in juxtaposition, held together by no common authority, to which men can look up with confidence and respect. Smitten by the charms of Upper Canada, our President has abandoned the several States, to shift for themselves as they can. Congress is *felo de se*. In practice, there is found little difference between a government of requisitions on the States, which these disregard, or a government of requisitions on the people, which the governors are afraid to make, until the public faith is irretrievably ruined. Congress seems barred by their own favorite act of limitations from raising supplies. Prescription runs against

them, but let us not despair of the Commonwealth. Some master-spirit may be kindled by the collision of the times who will breathe his own soul into the councils and armies of the Republic. And here, indeed, is our chiefest danger. The man, who is credulous enough to believe that a constitution, with the skeleton of an establishment of 10,000 men, not 2,000 strong (such was our army three years ago) is the same as with an army of 60,000 men, may be a very amiable neighbor, but is utterly unfit for a statesman. Already our government is in fact changed. We are become a military people, of whom more than of any other it might have been said *fortunatos suasi bona norint*. If, under such circumstances, you ask me what you are to do, should a conscription of the model of Bonaparte be attempted, I will refer you to its reputed projector, Colonel Monroe. Ask him what he would have done, whilst Governor of Virginia, and preparing to resist Federal usurpation, had such an attempt been made by Mr. Adams and his ministers; especially in 1800. He *can* give you the answer.

But, when you complain of the representation of three-fifths of our slaves, I reply that it is one of the articles of that compact which you submitted to us for acceptance, and to which we reluctantly acceded. Our Constitution is an affair of compromise between the States, and this is the master-key which unlocks all its difficulties. If any of the parties to the compact are dissatisfied with their share of influence, it is an affair of amicable discussion in the mode pointed out by the constitution itself, but no cause for dissolving the Confederacy. And, when I read and hear the vile stuff against my country printed and uttered on this subject, by fire-brands, who ought to be quenched forever, I would remind, not these editors of journals and declaimers at clubs, but their deluded followers that every word of these libels on the planters of Virginia is as applicable to the Father of his Country as to any one among us; that in the same sense [that] we are 'slaveholders' and 'negro drivers' and 'dealers in human flesh' (I must be pardoned for culling a few of their rhetorical flowers) so was *he*; and, whilst they upbraid Virginia with her Jeffersons and her Madisons, they will not always remem-

ber to forget that to Virginia they were indebted for a Washington.

I am, with the highest respect and regard, dear sir, your obedient servant,

JOHN RANDOLPH OF ROANOKE."



## Notes





## NOTES

### VOLUME I

#### P. 3 (a)

"There are along the river [the James] the ruins of many houses, which I was told had been accidentally burnt by the negroes whose carelessness is productive of infinite mischief." *Notes on a Journey in America*, by Morris Birkbeck (3rd Ed.), 1818, 14. Three of the Southside Virginia houses which sheltered Randolph during the different stages of his existence—Cawsons, Matoax and Bizarre—were consumed by fire, and so also, in 1879, was the frame dwelling which was one of the two buildings in which he lived at Roanoke, after it had become the home of the Hon. Wood Boul-din, an upright and able judge, whose memory is still cherished in Virginia.

#### P. 14 (a)

Among the painful things in that clever, but repulsive, book, *The Educa-tion of Henry Adams*, is the detraction to which Adams subjects the intel-lectual character of General William Henry Fitzhugh, or "Roony," Lee, who was one of his classmates at Harvard on the eve of the Civil War. He was not a scholar, he had no mental training, he was very simple in character, no one knew enough to know how ignorant he was—these are some of the kindly observations that Adams had to make, after the mel-lowing lapse of forty-seven years, on a college comrade, for whom he says that he entertained an unbroken and even warm friendship. It was such friendship as this, we imagine, that first provoked the question: "What is friendship but a name?" Indeed, so confidential does Adams become with his readers that he even tells them that, when Gen. Winfield Scott offered young Lee a military commission, the latter asked Adams to write his letter of acceptance for him. This confidence, however, we confess is not highly enough appreciated by us, at any rate, to make us forget the observation of Henry S. Randall, the biographer of Jefferson (v. 2, p. 210) that under such circumstances the well settled rule among gentlemen is that the publication of the authorship should depend entirely upon the will of the *ostensible* author.. Altogether, as the result of his "momentary contact" with Lee and two other Virginians in his class, whom, with Lee, he likens to Sioux Indians, out of place, Adams declares that his self-esteem as a Yankee was flattered by gaining the slow conviction that the South-erner, with his slave-holding limitations, was as little fit to succeed in the struggle of modern life as though he were still a maker of stone axes, living in caves, and hunting the *bos primigenius*. If Lee did not shine as a scholar

at Harvard, it is hard to see why such a common occurrence should be used in such a malignant manner for the purpose of disparaging not only him but a whole people, especially as it is not necessary to go outside of the Lee family to find two persons who did excel in academic competition; namely, Robert E. Lee, who stood second in his class at West Point, and George Washington Custis Lee, his son, who stood first in his at the same institution—facts the importance of which it would be much easier to exaggerate, if, like “Roony” Lee at Harvard, Ulysses S. Grant and “Stonewall” Jackson had not had but a poor scholastic standing at West Point. It must be admitted, of course, that “Roony” Lee lacked the literary capacity—to say nothing of the unwholesome nature and dreary views both of this world and the next necessary for the composition of such a book as *The Education of Henry Adams*; which was but the last convulsive twitch that its author gave to the dull ear of public attention when he had all but relinquished in despair the hope of ever acquiring a solid fame like that of his three immediate ancestors. It is certain, too, that “Roony” Lee lacked the inclination, whether he lacked the ability or not, to fill such a post as Adams filled abroad during the Civil War, when “the sweet clarion’s breath” was stirring “the soldier’s scorn of death,” and thousands of gallant young men, such as his brother, Charles Francis Adams, the younger, and “Roony” Lee, were sealing their faith with their blood on the battlefields of Virginia. But if “Roony” Lee could not have written *The Education of Henry Adams*, could Henry Adams have successfully commanded a brigade in the Army of Northern Virginia, or in the Army of the Potomac? The question, of course, cannot be put without a smile; and, if Adams could not, then until human ideas about the relative merit of academic writers and men of action shall undergo a profounder change than they have yet undergone, the public judgment will be slow to consign “Roony” Lee to the humble place in the scale of intellectual superiority to which Adams consigns him, and will readily find a sufficient compensation for any scholastic deficiencies that may have been justly attributed to him at Harvard in the description which Henry Adams himself gives of him in other respects: “Tall, largely built, handsome, genial, with liberal Virginian openness towards all he liked, he had also the Virginian habit of command, and took leadership as his natural habit.” Nor will the fact be overlooked that two much more remarkable men than either Henry Adams or “Roony” Lee—Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant—did not disdain in their military careers to avail themselves freely of the literary facility of Col. Charles Marshall and General Adam Badeau, respectively. “Roony” Lee was a gallant and skillful officer and an indefatigable and useful member of Congress, and it can be truly said that in private life his sterling virtues, amiable traits, and manners as bland and gentle as his heart was brave and inspiring to the hearts of others endeared him to all who knew him.

P. 15 (a)

It would be easy to mention not a few living descendants of William Randolph of Turkey Island, who are successfully sustaining the prestige

of his name today; such as Isham Randolph, of Chicago, the celebrated engineer; John Randolph Bland, of Baltimore, the founder and President of the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Co., one of the great guaranty and fidelity companies of the world; Harold Randolph, of Baltimore, the Director of the Peabody Conservatory of Music, and John Skelton Williams, Comptroller of the Currency, under the administration of Woodrow Wilson. At one time in the present century, a majority of the Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals, Judges James Keith, George M. Harrison, and Stafford G. Whittle, were descendants of William Randolph. *Some Lawyers in Colonial Va.*, by Armistead C. Gordon.

P. 16 (b)

"I know one of my ancestors was a gentleman," declared Randolph, "for he was a king." *Nathan Loughborough MSS.*

P. 17 (a)

In his *John Randolph*, published in 1882, Henry Adams states that not an acre of this land then belonged to a Randolph, but that the Randolphs or anyone else might have bought back the whole of it for a song at any time within half a century. But it can at least be said that an abandoned farm, a thing that has been by no means uncommon even in such an industrious and thrifty community as New England, is a phenomenon which has never been known to Southside Virginia. In 1890, the Lower Quarter of the Roanoke estate owned by John Randolph, which contained 1,027 acres, was sold for \$20,000, or, at the rate of about \$20.00 an acre. Multiply the 40,000 acres of Richard Randolph of Curles by \$20.00, and the product will be \$800,000—a sum which may have been a song to Henry Adams, but would have been more like a grand crash of orchestral harmony to a Southside Virginian in 1882. However, it must be admitted that \$20.00 an acre was a liberal price for the Lower Quarter in 1890.

P. 18 (a)

In his *John Randolph*, Henry Adams states that Richard Randolph of Curles disposed by will in 1742 of 40,000 acres of land, including Matoax. (P. 3) The will of Richard Randolph was executed on Nov. 18, 1747 (*Henrico Co., Va., Deed and Will Book for 1748-50, Va. State Libr.*), and he never owned Matoax at all. It was purchased by his son, John, the father of John Randolph of Roanoke, many years after the death of Richard. (*Will Book 2, p. 328, Chesterfield Co., Va., Clerk's Office.*)

P. 25 (a)

For this politeness the British made him a poor return. When Phillips and Arnold invaded Southside Virginia in 1781, Phillips in express requital for it issued an order that no part of the property of Col. Theodorick Bland, Sr., at Cawsons, should receive any injury from His Majesty's troops. But they chose to construe the order literally, raided the home of Col. Theodorick Bland, Jr., at Farmingdale, broke his furniture to pieces, pounded up his china-ware, destroyed his crops and live-stock and carried off his negroes. *Hist. of the Colony, etc., of Va., by Chas. Campbell, 721.*

## P. 30 (a)

"Among New Englanders, Chief Justice Parsons was the model of judicial, social, and religious propriety; yet Parsons in 1808 presented to a lady a copy of *Tom Jones* with a letter calling attention to the adventures of Molly Seagrim, and the usefulness of describing vice." *Hist. of the U. S.*, by Henry Adams, v. 1, 48.

## P. 31 (a)

In one of his letters, Randolph said that there were times when the chaos of his mind could be compared with nothing but the state that poor Cowper was in before he found peace, or rather after the death of Mrs. Unwin. *Garland*, v. 2, 107.

## P. 32 (a)

His land adjoined Matoax.

## P. 45 (a)

It is stated by Garland that Randolph was not inclined to the athletic outdoor sports of which boys are so fond. v. 1, 13. This assertion is supported by no evidence to our knowledge. From an early age we find him engaging in all the healthy open-air pastimes which belonged to the life of Southside Virginia; such as trapping, fishing, hunting, and riding. His brother, Beverley Tucker, tells us that, when a boy, he was not only remarkable for personal beauty, but for "fondness for athletic sports." *The Hist. Mag.* (1859), v. 3, 187. He even took his gun with him to Philadelphia, when he went to that City in his youth, and often shot over the ground between the upper ferry and the Falls of the Schuylkill. *Letters to a Y. R.*, 79.

## P. 59 (a)

A description of Grigsby by Dr. James Waddell Alexander deserves transcription, though written in rather an elliptical way: "I have met here an original. ————— is a Yale man, about as deaf as —————. He has an office built in the yard lined with glazed cases, wherein 2,000 volumes. As much of *littérateur* as I ever saw. Was a member of the Virginia Convention in 1830. Thorough scholar in Greek, Latin and French. Perfect health and athletic vigor. A boxer in all the forms; as to diet and bathing almost a *Cornaro*. He has not eaten warm bread for ten years. Shaves in his shirt in a cold room in winter. A pedestrian, has walked all over Canada and several times over New England. The last day of his return from Canada to Norfolk he walked 55 miles, and then was at office business on his feet till 10 at night. For this journey he *trained* on Captain Barclay's scheme, two meals a day of rare beef and Madeira and stale bread, this for three weeks. He has every sort of gymnastical contrivance, always stands at study with legs wide apart, and no support. His chest is like the keel of a boat. He is an intimate friend of Upshur, Judge B. Tucker and other ultra States-Rights men, to which

party he belongs. I have met with nothing like him for knowledge of history, biography, heraldry and the like. He is an eloquent talker." *Forty Years' Familiar Letters*, vol. 1, 352. March 21, 1842.

P. 68 (a)

"I am now with my friend, Col. Mercer, of Fredericksburg. Tomorrow I set off for Richmond, and from thence almost immediately to Williamsburg to see Cabell, who has lately married one of the finest and richest girls in Virginia." *Letter from Washington Irving to Miss Mary Fairlie*, May 13, 1807, *Irving by Irving*, v. 1, 190.

P. 79 (a)

Every now and then the old slander shows some signs of animation, but for all practical purposes it has been dead ever since 1856, when *The Vindication* was republished by Peter V. Daniel, supported by letters from Chief Justice Roger B. Taney, George Bancroft, and others, expressing their confidence in the entire innocence of Randolph. "His argument (I mean Randolph's)," declares Taney, after a merciless dissection of the case which very justly did not spare even Washington, "is conclusive." *Edmund Randolph*, by Moncure D. Conway, 349-353. The departure of Washington, in the Fauchet case, from the habitual principles of rigid justice, which all but invariably governed his conduct, may well be compared to

"A spot upon a vestal's robe,  
The worse for what it soils."

Edmund Randolph was not only an honorable man, but, in many regards, a very amiable one. "To respect, nay, to love Mr. Randolph," Benjamin H. Latrobe says in his Diary, "it is only necessary to see him at his fireside—the father, the husband and the friend." *John H. B. Latrobe and His Times*, by John E. Semmes.

P. 91 (a)

"We are now little better than the trustees of slave labor for the nabobs of the East, and of the North (if there be any such persons in our country) and to the speculators of the West. They regulate our labor. Are we to have *two* masters? When every vein has been sluiced—when our whole system presents nothing but one pitiful enchymosis—are we to be patted and tapped to find yet another vein to breathe not for the Federal Government but for our own?" *Speech of J. R. on the Basis of Representation in the Va. Conv., of 1829-30. Debates*, 318.

P. 94 (a)

Many years afterwards he stated in the House that he had spent almost every day in attendance upon the sittings of the first Congress.

P. 95 (a)

"Mr. James Innes, the Attorney General of the State, (also a Colonel) ranks, I think, first in genius, in force of thought and power of expression,

and in effect of voice and manner. He is at the same time a man of the most amiable and benevolent disposition, open, generous and unreserved; more I think of the character of Charles Fox than any other man I ever knew. His only fault is indolence." *Diary of Benjamin H. Latrobe, John H. B. Latrobe and His Times, by John E. Semmes, 7.*

Side by side with the testimony of this discriminating critic, we might as well place the "coarse praise" which Latrobe tells us was bestowed upon Innes by one of his rustic auditors: "He has his belly full of words and they come pouring along like a great fresh." *Id.*, 8.

P. 110 (a)

After reading the names of these Justices, we can readily understand why Chief Justice Marshall and Benjamin Watkins Leigh should have been such earnest upholders in the Virginia Convention of 1829-30 of a judicial system that commanded the gratuitous services of the class in Virginia most conspicuous for wealth, intelligence and social prominence. To the old County Courts and the freehold suffrage, which withstood the levelling influence of Jefferson until 1851, was unquestionably due the extraordinary capacity exhibited by Virginia for filling the highest public places with the men worthiest, in point of character and talent, to fill them. Marshall thought that the fact that in no part of America was there less disquiet, or less ill-feeling between man and man than in Virginia, was mainly referable to its County Courts. *Debates, 505.* And in speaking of the success with which they had performed their judicial and other duties, Leigh said: "There is a purity, an easy unassuming, unconscious dignity, and, above all, an impress of neighborly kindness seen and felt in the administration of all their powers, which has endeared these tribunals to the people and procured for them universal respect." *Debates, 514.*

P. 124 (a)

"Each," Hugh Blair Grigsby tells us in his *Discourse on Tazewell*, "was a supreme master of reasoning in his respective department, and, if we look along their entire course at the bar, it is hard to say which of the two won the most verdicts. Perhaps, though both of these able men wielded at times an almost omnipotent sway over juries and over the Bench, yet it may be said that the style of Tazewell was more decisive with the Court, and that of Taylor with the jury." (P. 36) Taylor was also famous for his colloquial powers. *So. Lit. Mess., v. 18, 101.* Tazewell is the Sidney, and Taylor the Herbert, in the sketches of the two by William Wirt in *The Old Bachelor*.

P. 129 (a)

Garland states that Mrs. Dudley's husband had died when she came to Bizarre, (v. 1, 63) but this was not the case. On Feb. 12, 1808, Randolph wrote to Theodore Dudley, her son: "I have heard nothing from your father or mother since I left home." *Letters to a Y. R., 46.*

## P. 130 (a)

If Thompson had not died early in life, there can be little doubt that, with the sobering influence of time, he would have fully redeemed his promise. He was a college mate of Littleton Waller Tazewell at William and Mary, and by Tazewell he was pronounced the most wonderful young man that he had ever seen. *Discourse on Tazewell, by Grigsby, 13.*

## P. 141 (a)

Creed Taylor has suffered the last indignity to which an once celebrated American can be subjected—that of being wholly omitted from our populous cyclopædias of American biography. He is nothing; not even an academician; yet in his time he was a vigorous and learned lawyer, the founder of an useful law school, a Virginia Chancellor, and a highly influential politician; not to speak of the aristocratic bearing and elegant manners which set off his intellectual and social gifts to great advantage. With the decline of his health in his later years, his temper is said to have become so hasty and arbitrary that, on one occasion, when Peachy Gilmer, a member of the Bar, reminded him that the clock wanted three-quarters of an hour of twelve o'clock, the hour that he had fixed for the reassembling of the court, he exclaimed passionately "Gentlemen, I will have you in future to know that when *I* take *my* seat on the bench it is 12 o'clock!" *Sketches of Lynchburg, by the oldest inhabitant. (Mrs. Cabell) 58.*

## P. 142 (a)

Randolph does not seem to have added the words "of Roanoke" to his signature before the year 1810. The first instance of his doing so, was, we believe, at the foot of a letter written by him to Dr. George Logan, on Jan. 24, 1810. He adopted the words, there is little reason to doubt, to distinguish him from a kinsman, John Randolph, one of the brothers of Judith and Nancy Randolph, who resided at no great distance from Bizarre. This man was described by John Randolph of Roanoke as a person of infamous character, and a homeless vagabond, in a letter dated Roanoke, May 27, 1811, which was written to James M. Garnett (*J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*) shortly after the other John Randolph had made a murderous assault upon the writer, which might have cost him his life; and all because the subject of the assault had been guilty of the outrage of seeking to collect from him the sum of £14 due by him for service to his mare by a stallion at Bizarre: "I have every reason to suppose," said Randolph, incensed by the rabid animosity of his political enemies, "that this fellow with whom I never had any intercourse further than to speak when we met, was instigated probably hired, (for he is needy and desperate), to commit the deed. I was wholly unarmed, yet he drew a knife upon me, and would have stabbed me, if it had not closed as he struck. He did cut my coat. I gave him the lash, and afterwards the butt end, of Leigh's whip, leaving a mark upon him that he will not soon lose." The assailant, who bore the nickname "Possum," according to Randolph's Diary, was further described by Randolph



in his letter as a man of great strength and a professed bully, and was armed with a pistol, loaded with saddler's tacks, as well as with the knife; but, with the exception of a slightly lacerated eye Randolph issued from the fracas without injury. With true refinement of feeling, he endeavored to keep the knowledge of this disgraceful affair from Judith; but she heard of it, and wrote to him in these terms, stern enough to have befitted the story of that other Judith and Holofernes: "I have heard since I saw you of the ruffian-like assault which has been made upon you. In justice to my own feelings, I must declare my utter abhorrence of it. Since his marriage, I have never seen the object who has been guilty of this cowardly action, and I now sincerely hope I never may." *J. R. to James M. Garnett, June 23, 1811, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 143 (a)

Joel Watkins, it is believed.

P. 147 (a)

"He spake as never man spake"; "In eloquence his deceit was deeper than the bottom of the sea"; "The united powers of painting and eloquence could alone give a *faint* idea of the character of Henry"; are other utterances about Henry imputed to Randolph.

P. 153 (a)

To this may be added a sentence or so from the abstract of Randolph's career by his brother, Beverley Tucker, published in the *Historical Magazine*, 1859, v. 3, 187: "Candidate for Congress in '99. Unknown to the people. Boy in appearance. No family influence or connection in District; elected by the power of his eloquence."

P. 165 (a)

"I have never been insensible to my numerous failures as a public speaker; on the contrary, I believe not one of the audience has been so deeply impressed with the sense of them as myself. I have a perception equally clear to my more fortunate and happy efforts, perhaps the best of these (certainly not inferior to any) was my effort against the Bankrupt Bill about two years ago. It never appeared but fell still born from my lips—nay I doubt if ten persons in the country ever knew that I had spoken at all; and this has been the uniform fate of my best performances in this way—The Connecticut Reserve, the first Yazoo debate, and some others." *J. R. to James M. Garnett, Jan. 14, 1824, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 165 (b)

"The skeleton of the speech has been mounted by some bungler, who knows nothing of political osteology," he wrote to Theodore Dudley on one occasion. "I feel ashamed of myself—not only stripped of my muscle, but my very bones disjointed." *Feb. 11, 1813, Letters to a Y. R., 137.*

P. 167 (a)

In a letter to James M. Garnett, dated March 22, 1820, Randolph said:

"I want to have Spencer Roane for President. '*En dat Virginia quartum*,' and if we can't get him, I want a Roanoke planter from the North State." *J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* A few months after these words were written, John Quincy Adams entered the following observations on Macon in his *Memoirs*: "Macon is a stern Republican, who has been about 25 years without interruption in Congress—a man of small parts and mean education; but of rigid integrity, and a blunt, though not offensive, deportment. He was several years Speaker of the House of Representatives, and is now one of the most influential members of the Senate. His integrity, his indefatigable attention to business, and his long experience give him a weight of character and consideration which few men of far superior minds can acquire." *v. 5, 205, Nov. 21, 1830.*

P. 185 (a)

In narrating the history of the Yazoo fraud, we wish to acknowledge our indebtedness to Albert J. Beveridge, the author of the widely read *Life of John Marshall*, for the assistance derived by us from his thorough investigation of the authorities relating to that monstrous transaction; and also to make a similar acknowledgment, in connection with the subsequent portions of the present work, which bear upon the Chase trial, and the character of the City of Washington at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

P. 203 (a)

"Harper is diffuse, but methodical and clear. He argues with considerable warmth, and seems to depend upon the deliberate suggestions of his mind. I incline to think that he studies his causes with great diligence, and is to be considered as in some degree artificial." *Jos. Story to Sam'l P. P. Fay, Feb. 16, 1808, Story, by Story, v. 1, 162.*

P. 204 (a)

In a letter from Joseph Story to Sam'l P. P. Fay, dated Washington, Feb. 16, 1808, Lee is presented to the eye of our time in this spectral fashion: "Lee, of Virginia, is a thin, spare, short man. You cannot believe that he was Attorney General of the United States. I heard him speak for a few minutes, but the impression is so faint that I cannot analyze it." *Story, by Story, v. 1, 163.*

P. 205 (a)

As Judge Chase was no more bigoted in his hatred of Democrats, than Dr. Samuel Johnson was in his hatred of American Whigs, it is but fair to say that no less a person than Joseph Story was of the opinion that he also possessed some of the strong points of Dr. Johnson: "In person, in manners, in unwieldly strength, in severity of reproof, in real tenderness of heart, and, above all, in intellect, he was the living, I had almost said, the exact, image of Samuel Johnson." *Letter to Fay, Feb. 25, 1808, Story, by Story, v. 1, 168.*

## P. 207 (a)

By a process of laborious inflation, Federalist writers, in their desire to traduce Jefferson and John Randolph, have puffed up the figure of Luther Martin to a degree of distension that is quite artificial. If the distempered description given by John Quincy Adams of the final speech of Randolph in the Chase case is to be accepted, what value are we to assign to the great volume of testimony to the personal and professional defects of Martin, who was happily termed, by one of the Virginia Mercers, "the Thersites of the law"? *Blennerhassett Papers*, 378. "Martin," declares Blennerhassett in connection with one of Martin's forensic efforts in the Burr trial, "at last concluded with the adjournment this evening. Want of arrangement, verbosity and eternal repetitions have more than sated the malice of his enemies." *Blennerhassett Journal*, Oct. 14, 1807, *Blennerhassett Papers*, 455. Describing Martin a little later, Joseph Story says: "Nothing in his voice, his action, his language impresses. Of all men he is the most desultory, wandering and inaccurate. Errors in grammar, and indeed an unexampled laxity of speech mark him everywhere. All nature pays contribution to his argument, if indeed it can be called one. You might hear him for three hours, and he would neither enlighten nor amuse you, but, amid the abundance of chaff, is excellent wheat, and, if you can find it, the quality is of the first order. In the case to which I have alluded (a case in the Supreme Court) he spoke three days. I heard him as much as I could, but I was fatigued almost to death." *Letter to Sam'l P. P. Fay, Washington, Feb. 16, 1808, Story, by Story, v. 1, 164.*

## P. 211 (a)

"I find that Federal members have every day listened to John Randolph with unmixed pleasure in opposition to the mean, dastardly Democrats of N. England!" *Timothy Pickering to Rufus King, Washington, Jan. 13, 1806, Life of King, by King, v. 4, 476.*

Four years later, Nathaniel Macon wrote to Joseph H. Nicholson: "The Feds seem to be in good spirits. They pay more attention to our friend [Randolph] than I ever saw one set of men pay to any man." *Apr. 3, 1810, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.*

## P. 211 (b)

It has usually been thought that the biographer should have a certain amount of general sympathy, at least, with the subject of his work but the hereditary hatred of the Adams family for Randolph was apparently considered a better qualification when Henry Adams was selected to write his life. With such satisfaction does Adams chuckle over this description of Randolph borrowed from Ovid's description of Envy that in his *John Randolph* he hastens to cap the two lines quoted by his grandfather with three more from the same context equally derogatory. (P. 290). In another place (P. 284), he says that "it was not for an instant imagined or imaginable that either of the Yankee Presidents (John Adams and John

Quincy Adams) ever entertained any other feeling than contempt" for Randolph. If Adams had no proper sense of delicacy to tell him that such an exhibition of family spleen as this could not fail to disgust all fair-minded men, he might at least, one would think, have had a sufficient sense of true literary expediency to avoid such a violation of biographical decency. In quoting his two lines from the *Metamorphoses*, John Quincy Adams unwarrantably added an "*est*" after "*macies*" in the first line, and omitted an intervening line,

*"Nusquam recta acies, livent rubigine dentes."*

He might have quoted the first half of this line too, for Randolph's vision gave him a great deal of trouble at times; but not the second, for Randolph's teeth were faultlessly clean and white.

#### P. 219 (a)

The Diary of John Randolph contains the following bit of gossip in regard to Granger, and the charge made by James Thompson Callander that Jefferson had been turned out of the House of a certain Major Walker for writing a love letter to his wife: "Gideon P. M. G. holds his office by a *certain* tenure. When a prosecution was commenced *at common law* in Connecticut for a libel upon Mr. J., he wrote to Granger *confidentially* and intrusted certain papers to him relating to Mrs. W——'s affair, which the wary Yankee refused to give up. He was alternately threatened and soothed by the P. and his agents, but to no purpose; and, although he is for the best reasons hated by Mr. M——n, and, what is of more moment, by Mrs. M——n, he boasts that he will retain his place under the new P." The Diary also asserts elsewhere that when John Marshall, as the biographer of Washington, proceeded to examine the latter's correspondence, which had been entrusted by Bushrod Washington to Tobias Lear, the private secretary of Washington, all the letters from Jefferson to Washington were found to be missing, and it hints a connection between this fact and the fact that Lear had obtained from Jefferson an honorable and lucrative appointment, which he still held by no precarious tenure.

#### P. 220 (a)

Decidedly petty was the other form in which the chagrin of Randolph over the result of the Chase trial was exhibited: that of endeavoring to prevent the expenses incurred by Judge Chase in the production of his witnesses from being paid out of the Federal Treasury.

#### P. 250 (a)

But Randolph experienced no difficulty in subjecting Bidwell to extradition for the purposes of parliamentary punishment at least. At a time when the invasion of Canada was on every tongue, he said in the House: "At the motion of a gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Bidwell), who had since taken a great fancy also to Canada, and had marched off thither in advance of the Committee on Foreign Relations, \$2,000,000 were appropri-

ated towards (not in full of) 'any extraordinary expense which might be incurred in the intercourse between the United States and foreign nations'; in other words, to buy off at Paris Spanish aggressions at home." *A. of C.*, 1811-12, v. 1, 445.

P. 252 (a)

Nathaniel Macon to Joseph H. Nicholson, Wash., Jan. 6, 1807. *Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.*

P. 252 (b)

*Hist. of U. S.*, by Adams, viii, 167. But did Jefferson have anything to do with this matter? Nicholson was also offered the collectorship of the Port of Baltimore by Jefferson; but declined it. *Jas. Bryan to J. R.*, Dec. 28, 1806, *Bryan MSS.*

P. 255 (a)

"His method of attack was always the same: to spring suddenly, violently, straight at the face of his opponent, was his invariable rule; and in this sort of rough-and-tumble he had no equal." *John Randolph, by Henry Adams*, 172.

P. 257 (a)

Indeed Sloan—for the worm will turn—drew quite a vivid picture of Randolph, when, with his back to the wall, Randolph was warding off the blows of his enemies with almost frenzied violence: "Has he been so enamoured with the conduct of the once patriotic statesman, but afterward apostate Burke, as to induce him to make a puerile attempt to exhibit on the floor of that House his impressive and energetic mode of delivery by exerting his weak nerves and feeble arm to cause the pens, the papers, the books and the hats to fly in every direction, in so much that, if they had been musket balls, instead of those light materials, the American patriot would soon have been left to exhibit the remainder of his superlative eloquence within empty walls." *A. of C.*, 1805-07, 1110.

P. 265 (a)

No book with which we are acquainted that is worth reading at all is such a mass of errors as Sawyer's biography. They are scattered over its pages as thickly as the pits over a badly pock-marked face; and it would be a waste of time to point out even a tithe of them. He says, for instance, that Randolph spoke only once in the Virginia Convention of 1829-30; (*P.* 130) when a cursory examination of the printed Debates of the Convention would have shown that Randolph spoke in it over and over again. He also says that Randolph "did not attend during the Congressional Session of 1818, being detained at home by indisposition" (*P.* 73) when his own presence as a member in the House of 1818, if nothing else, should have reminded him that Randolph was not even a member of the House in 1818.

P. 269 (a)

Testifying in the Randolph Will Litigation, Captain William Smith, a tavern keeper at Charlotte Court House, with whom Randolph was in the

habit of stopping, when he was at that place, said: "During the whole of the period between 1820 and 1829, he [Randolph] was the most clear-headed and sensible man I ever saw or knew."

P. 269 (b)

"Whatever may have been his (Randolph's) shortcomings, by reason of bad health and other deficiencies more or less beyond his control, in making his exertions effective, the political doctrines and principles which he advocated were well adapted to the support of a system like ours—indeed those only by which we can hope to uphold it in its integrity" *Autobiog. of Martin Van Buren*, 428.

P. 275 (a)

Speaking of the position of Randolph in the House just after the negotiation of the Treaty for the Purchase of Louisiana, Henry Adams says "His influence in the House became irresistible." *John Randolph*, 85.

P. 281 (a)

The idea of Henry Adams that Randolph went back to Bizarre in April, 1806, a "ruined statesman," and never again represented anybody but himself, or had any but mere rags and tatters of political principles (*John Randolph*, 194, 195), is not only entirely foreign to the true facts of the case, but hopelessly at war with his own observations, in his *John Randolph and History of the United States*, in which he repeatedly certifies in the strongest terms to the extraordinary influence exerted by Randolph in many respects in opposition. The feelings entertained for Randolph by his constituents and thousands of other citizens of the United States during the later stages of his Congressional career were enthusiastically voiced by E. W. Duval in a letter, dated March 31, 1828 (*Nathan Loughborough MSS.*): "I was, as you are well aware, even in my boyish days, a warm and decided admirer not only of the peculiar and splendid talents, but of the political course and character, of Mr. Randolph. In all the changes that have taken place in men and measures within my recollection, I have never been able to discover in him any departure from the principles of his early life. This and his great and felicitous endowments, together with the fearless independence, which disdains to 'feign a feeling or to conceal a truth,' by which the whole history of his career is so strikingly characterized, place him, in my estimation, on a more enviable and exalted eminence than is occupied by any other public man of the present day. I would not, in solemn seriousness,—I declare it—exchange, could I possess his natural gifts, learning and acquirements, his present standing and prospects of future fame for those of the numerous aspirants to the highest office in the gift of the people."

P. 284 (a)

"You are as well known, and have as high a reputation in England as Monroe himself." *Jos. Bryan to J. R., March 8, 1807. Bryan MSS.*

## P. 284 (b)

In these observations Randolph's arguments against Gregg's Resolution are justly termed "very powerful and eloquent." P. 8.

## P. 292 (a)

On another occasion, he assailed the Senate in these words: "I am free to declare that when a measure, tending to impose a burden on the people, or to detract from the privileges of the citizen, comes from that quarter, I shall always view it with jealousy. The inequality of the representation in that branch, the long tenure of office, and the custom with which they are so familiar of conducting their proceedings in conclave . . . render all their proceedings touching the public burdens or the liberties of the people highly suspicious." *A. of C., 1805-07; v. 2, 417.*

## P. 294 (a)

After telling us that Randolph said in 1817 that he had voted in favor of the bill to prohibit trade with San Domingo, which came up in the House in 1806, Henry Adams says: "He was mistaken. He did not vote at all." (*John Randolph, 188.*) If Randolph said in 1817 that he voted in favor of this bill, he said no more than he said on May 6, 1812, too. (*A. of C., 1811-12; v. 2, 1404.*) Why should the journal of a Legislative body be accepted as infallible, when twice contradicted by the memory of an irreproachably truthful member?

## P. 296 (a)

"The present Grand Jury (the most enlightened, perhaps, that was ever assembled in this country) will be discharged." *Letter from Washington Irving to Mrs. Hoffman, Richmond, June 4, 1807, Life, &c., of W. I., by Irving, v. 1, 192.*

## P. 300 (a)

There are several descriptions of Richmond as it was at or about the time of the Burr trial, which were written by persons whose judgment could not be colored by birth or residence in Virginia. "I am absolutely enchanted with Richmond," Washington Irving declared in one of his letters from that City, written during the pendency of the Burr trial, "and like it more and more every day. The society is polished, sociable and extremely hospitable." *Irving*, by Irving, v. 1, 196. In the succeeding year, Edward Hooker gives us this highly effective little picture of Richmond in his Diary: "Richmond appears beautifully as you approach, and view it from the hills, a mile distant. The Capitol towers pre-eminent, and appears gigantic indeed among the other buildings. The side of the hill from the river up to the top seems covered with clusters of buildings. Remote from the center, on the right and left, a mile or two, and at a still greater distance, handsome seats crown the top and sides of the mountain, scattered here and there. Above you hear the roaring of the waters, and see its white sheet here and there between the rocks and islands. Below a calmer scene invites you to



look at the shipping, which lies clustered in a basin or bend of the river. As you come up, you pass through Manchester, a separate corporation on this side of the river; then, crossing the very long, tall bridge, at the foot of the falls, you enter one of the most beautiful cities on the continent. Richmond, as I viewed it a mile or two off, appears more like some of the drafts of European cities, particularly those on the banks of the Rhine, than any I had ever seen. Walked up a very steep hill indeed, and visited the Capitol soon after my arrival. The House of Delegates had just met, and chosen Mr. Hugh Nelson, of Albermarle, their Speaker, and were proceeding to business. It seemed the most dignified body I ever beheld. The room was spacious and very elegant. The members in elliptical seats, and around the Speaker's chair. All, with very few exceptions, were well dressed and easy and graceful in deportment. Many young, mostly middle-aged, and few or none are quite old. Many spoke shortly, and with ease, grace and composure on the returns of elections from Amherst County." *1896 Report of Amer. Hist. Assoc., v. 1, 917.*

What Hooker says about the manner in which the members of the Virginia Legislature were dressed does not accord with the ideas that Joseph Story expressed on the same subject in a letter to Sam'l P. P. Fay, dated May 30, 1807: "You know Virginians have some pride in appearing in simple habiliments, and are willing to rest their claim to attention upon their force of mind and suavity of manners." *Story by Story, v. 1, 151.*

To the eye of John Melish, an English traveller, who passed through Richmond in 1806, it was "a large elegant city, consisting of more than one thousand houses," and containing "about eight thousand inhabitants." The ladies in Richmond, too, "appeared very handsome"; nor did he fail to note that the town already had the manufacturing bent which has always given it a distinctive place of its own among Southern Cities. *Travels Through the U. S. in 1806, &c., 160.*

Richmond also early acquired a reputation for good cheer worthy of a State that might well be termed the mother of cook-books as well as Presidents. In one of his letters to Nicholson, Randolph declared that good eating and drinking were as well understood and practiced upon there as at Capua itself. Richmond, June 6, 1810, *Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.*

#### P. 317 (a)

"Almost every respectable officer of the old service regarded Wilkinson with antipathy or contempt." *Hist. of U. S., by Henry Adams, v. 7, 174.* By Albert J. Beveridge he has been recently pronounced not only a corrupt pensioner of Spain but a "fecund liar." *Life of John Marshall, v. 3, 354 (note 2).*

#### P. 324 (a)

It was in this same year that Joseph Story wrote to Joseph White a letter in which he termed Randolph a speaker in the House of the first class. *Feb. 3, 1808, Story by Story, v. 1, 161.*



## P. 325 (a)

John Randolph was suspected of writing for the press above the name "One of the Protesters," and, in a letter to Dabney Carr, dated May 11, 1808, Wm. Wirt said: "When I said in the *Enquirer* that I should be glad to receive the promised respects of 'one of the Protesters,' I made sure that John Randolph was coming out. I would have engaged with Achilles, but I do not relish a combat with one of his myrmidons." *Life of William Wirt, by Kennedy, v. 1, 231.* There is still another reference to Randolph by Wirt. "John Randolph," he wrote to the same correspondent, "has not gone on (to Washington), and to hear him speak was the *primum mobile* of Peter's project and mind. I am very anxious to hear John Randolph. They tell me that he is an orator, and I am curious to hear one; for I never yet heard a man who answered the idea I have formed of an orator. He has ever been ambitious, and I do not doubt that from the time he was seventeen years old he has been training himself most assiduously for public speaking." *Id., v. 1, 253.*

## P. 327 (a)

"Some men are born for the public. Nature, by fitting them for the service of the human race on a broad scale, has stamped them with the evidences of her destination and their duty." *Jefferson to Monroe, Jan. 13, 1803, Works of T. J., v. 4, 455.*

## P. 343 (a)

This was the second occasion on which Randolph visited Monroe in Albemarle County. In 1809, he made an equestrian excursion to the Valley of Virginia, visiting his brother Henry at Winchester, and his sister near Staunton, and then stopping on his way to Bizarre at the home of Monroe, whom he describes as being at that time "almost as recluse as a hermit," though busily engaged in the cultivation of a good estate of 2800 acres and the management of about 20 hands. *J. R. to James M. Garnett, July 31, 1809; J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* On his second visit to Monroe, only a change in his original itinerary saved him from an awkward *rencontre* there with the Jeffersons—the royal family as Randolph calls them—who had just paid a visit to Monroe. *J. R. to J. M. G., Oct. 10, 1810, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

## P. 345 (a)

The correspondence between John Randolph and James M. Garnett establishes the fact that, when the opportunity was held out to Monroe by Madison of renewing his party connection with Jefferson and his friends, he was very desirous before doing so of obtaining the approval of his own "Old Republican" friends, including John Randolph, and of taking them back into the party fold with him; and that, with a view to accomplishing these objects, he sounded certainly John Taylor of Caroline, Benjamin Watkins Leigh and Randolph. Taylor, from a high-minded desire to promote through Monroe the political principles, to which he was so religiously

devoted, favored the re-establishment of cordial relations between Monroe and the Jeffersonians; but Randolph did not, though he declined to advise Monroe whether he should become Secretary of State in Madison's cabinet or not, when Monroe solicited his advice on that subject. *James M. Garnett to J. R., Feb. 19, 1811, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS; J. R. to James M. Garnett, Apr. 11, 1811, Id.* There could be no better proof of Randolph's political disinterestedness, for he wrote to Garnett three days afterwards: "What think you of —S. of S.? I believe it will be so. Glamis and Cawdor—the greatest is behind." *March 19, 1811, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 348 (a)

The worst thing that Monroe is reported to have said of Randolph, after the estrangement between them, was this to Judge Watson: "Mr. Randolph is, I think, a capital hand to pull down, but I am not aware that he has ever exhibited much skill as a builder." *James Monroe, by Daniel C. Gilman, Amer. Statesmen Series, 190.*

P. 348 (b)

Only a short time before Monroe accepted the post of Secretary of State under the Madison administration, he wrote to Tazewell in these terms: "I fear, if the system of policy which has been so long persevered in, after so many proofs of its dangerous tendency, is still adhered to, that a crisis will arise, the dangers of which will require all the virtue, firmness and talent of our country to avert; and that it will be persevered in seems too probable while the present men remain in power. . . . And, if the blame of improvident and injudicious measures is ever to attach to them among the people, it must be by leaving to the authors of those measures the entire responsibility belonging to them." *Feb. 6, 1811, Monroe MSS.*

P. 349 (a)

Nor probably was this Randolph's cooler or more habitual view of the matter. That was rather of the nature of the one expressed by him in a letter to James M. Garnett, dated Feb 17, 1811: "I pity—from the very bottom of my soul. I am persuaded that he has been more weak than wicked; that he is habitually and incurably ambitious; that he cannot live without office; the stimulus of public consideration having become necessary to his existence. The resources of his own mind and estate cannot support him. He is not naturally flagitious. He has sacrificed *no more* of principle, and his friends no farther, than was absolutely indispensable to the attainment of his object." *J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

Chief Justice Marshall or Chancellor Kent could not have shaded justice with nicer precision. James M. Garnett and Benjamin Watkins Leigh thought that, even if Monroe did go over, at least "a personal intercourse and a reciprocity of friendly offices" might still subsist between Monroe and Randolph. But neither John Randolph nor John Mercer could see

the matter in that light. *J. M. G. to J. R., Feb. 26, 1811; J. R. to J. M. G., March 13, 1811; J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

Even if Monroe backslid a little after he got into office, he might yet do some good to the cause, was Garnett's idea. "For," said Garnett emphatically, "he will always be in office." *Letter to J. R., Feb. 26, 1811, J. M. G., Jr., MSS.*

It is obvious that Randolph was the real obstacle to Monroe's desire to return to Federal office with a comforting and imposing queue of *Tertium Quids* behind him to keep him in countenance and strengthen his hands. But the renewal of homage by Monroe to the party influences, with which he had been hardly less deeply disaffected than Randolph, could not fail to excite a certain amount of derisive contempt in other breasts than Randolph's. "What do you think," wrote Randolph to Garnett, on Feb. 4, 1811, "of the emissary [George Hay], who was dispatched to me on a late occasion, 'having signalized himself a few days ago at a public dinner by hanging on the skirts of Mr. G——s [Giles], who repelled him with *great dignity* until the wine placed all the company on a level.' So reads one of my late letters, and the writer adds that 'the most profound contempt is pouring on him from every quarter.' Hear another of my correspondents on the same subject: 'I am well informed that at a dinner given by certain members of the Assembly to the late Governor T., which was meant in reality as a *State Dinner*, in honor of the reunion (as it is called) of the Republicans, *that person* fastened himself upon G——s in spite of visible efforts in the latter (who is not at all pleased, as you may suppose at the reunion) to shake him off; sat by him at dinner, in spite of his teeth, insisting on waiting on him, changing his plate, filling his wine and the like menial offices; in short, courted him throughout the day with an assiduity which no coyness could avoid, no coldness repel, until at last the *Great Man*, warmed with wine and softened by submission and penitence, did condescend to bestow some little notice upon him.'" *J. M. G., Jr., MSS.* The whole attitude of Randolph towards Monroe and Hay, when they were seeking by personal interviews to induce him to "rat" too, was one of contemptuous amusement. "Yesterday," he said in a letter to Garnett, "—— called upon me, and in the afternoon his envoy. Both seemed disposed that I should forget late transactions, and there was a visible effort to forget it themselves, which, like an effort to go to sleep, served only to make the matter worse." *Richm., Mar. 16, 1811, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

#### P. 354 (a)

The newspaper communications signed "Mucius," and "One of the Protesters," respectively, which were published during the long running fire of hostility, kept up by Randolph and his friends with Jefferson and his friends, have been ascribed to Randolph; but he was the author of neither. Beverley Tucker was the reputed author of the latter. *J. R. to James M. Garnett, May 27, and July 24, 1808, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* Aside from the "Decius" letters, we know of none, either anonymous or pseudonymous, written by Randolph for the press. It is very much to be

regretted that he never apparently completed his reminiscences, which he certainly commenced. *Letter to J. M. Garnett, Aug. 31, 1807, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* Except for the purpose of writing letters, which he threw off in showers, he was, as he said of himself in a letter to Garnett, "but a poor scribe." *June 19, 1806, J. M. Garnett, MSS.* And this has been true of many another orator, whose tongue was too fluent to render the friction of pen and paper otherwise than insufferably irksome to him.

P. 358 (a)

On just what grounds Federalist writers, like Henry Cabot Lodge and Henry Adams, have reached the conclusion that William B. Giles was an unworthy man, in point of character, is not very clear. Perhaps, if his remarkable powers as a debater had not been so successful in exposing the privileged and proscriptive side of Federalism, his moral standing with them might be higher. "Giles, of Virginia, whom no man ever trusted without regret," is a phrase in the *John Randolph* of Henry Adams. (P. 142). But how can such purely academic extravagance or partisan strabismus impose upon anyone when it is recollected that the people of Virginia, aside from the occasional remissions of popularity which are inseparable from a political career, trusted him from his youth until he could no longer move or stand without the aid of his crutches, and never trusted him with any regret, whether as a member of the House of Representatives, or of the United States Senate, or as Governor of Virginia, or as a member of the Virginia Convention of 1829-30, that has not long ago been swallowed up in the lasting recollection of his remarkable talents and eminent services. There is nothing in his life to suggest any uncommon elevation of character or refinement of feeling, but we know nothing tending to show that he did not comply faithfully with all his private as well as official duties. When he is judged by the standards of his own time and place, the mind submits impatiently for a moment to the apparent insensibility exhibited by him to the menaces of John Randolph on several occasions; but it is manifest on the whole that he was simply disposed to make the fullest allowance for Randolph's heady temper, and that there was a point of endurance beyond which he was firmly prepared to hold Randolph to account on the duelling field.

P. 367 (a)

"I look upon him (Crawford) as the ablest man in our councils. He certainly possesses more of my confidence than any other man in Congress. There is a singleness of heart about him, a plain manly good sense, and a certain fairness of character that wins my regard and esteem. There is no trash in his understanding, no crooked double-dealing in his conduct." *J. R. to J. H. Nicholson, Jan. 17, 1813, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.*

P. 385 (a)

Randolph wrote to James M. Garnett on one occasion that a newspaper article signed "No Time-Server," if he had any skill in such matters, would

make certain gentry wince like a thin-skinned horse beset with May flies in their pine woods; but the larger fly, commonly known as "the horse-fly," is a greater nuisance even than the May fly.

P. 400 (a)

"This war, my old comrade, has been in most of its features a *civil war*—as such at least it has proved to me. It has rent the nation in twain, it has dissolved the oldest friendships, it has severed the ties of blood." *J. R. to Richard Stanford, April 9, 1814, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 426 (a)

It seemed so probable that, if John Randolph were beaten in 1815, in his own District, he would be elected to the house from another Congressional District in Virginia, that the Jeffersonian Republicans brought in a Bill in the Virginia Legislature which sought to prohibit the election of anyone to the House outside of his own District. *Life of Jefferson, by Randall, v. 3, 401.*

P. 426 (b)

The absences of Randolph from his seat during the two sessions preceding the Congressional Election in 1811 were among the things that cut down his majority in his District at that election. *J. R. to J. M. Garnett, April 16, 1811, and April 20, 1811, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* Ill health, considered in connection with the long exposure of a winter journey over frightful roads from Roanoke to Washington, was doubtless usually the cause of his occasional tardiness in leaving Roanoke at the beginning of the Congressional session.

P. 451 (a)

"On one occasion, when Mr. Clay, speaking in his not unusual personal and self-sufficient strain, declared, among other things, that his parents had left him nothing but indigence and ignorance, Randolph, turning to Mr. Seaton, said in a stage whisper to be heard by the House: "The gentleman might continue the alliteration, and add insolence." *Wm. Winston Seaton, A Biographical Sketch, 152.*

P. 453 (a)

Describing Randolph as he was at the time of the Missouri Compromise, Goodrich says: "As he uttered the words 'Mr. Speaker,' every member turned in his seat, and, facing him, gazed as if some portent had suddenly appeared before them. 'Mr. Speaker,' said he in a shrill voice, which, however, pierced every nook and corner of the hall, 'I have but one word to say; one word, Sir, and that is to state a fact. The measure to which the gentleman has just alluded originated in a dirty trick.'" *Recollections of S. G. Goodrich, 744.*

## P. 454 (a)

The distance that Randolph maintained between himself and President Monroe also kept him aloof from William Wirt when the latter became a member of President Monroe's Cabinet. To this he refers in a letter to Francis W. Gilmer. *Feb. 6, 1822, Bryan MSS.* But, long before Monroe became President, Randolph had expressed in singularly pointed terms his distaste for the meretricious finery in which that gifted and charming man sometimes tricked out his arguments in early life. Describing a speech by Wirt in a case involving the will of Abner Osborne, which he had recently heard at Powhatan Court House, he says: "At Powhatan C. H. I heard the great Mr. — make a speech of 9 hours; mark me I heard only the last half and it would have been thought had *even in Congress*. It was a tangled tissue of faded metaphors and languid figures and bore evident marks of the Green Room, the Property Man, and the Prompter about it." *Letter to James M. Garnett, May 27, 1811, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

## P. 524 (a)

The reconciliation between Clay and Randolph was too dramatic, however, to last, and, after the duel, Clay very sensibly allowed his challenge to it to suffice as a salve to his wounded honor on subsequent occasions also, when the hostility of his friends to Randolph had drawn from Randolph language about Clay as opprobrious as that which had provoked the duel. In his Speech on Retrenchment and Reform in the House, in 1828, Randolph, after charging point-blank that there had been a "collusion and a corrupt collusion" between John Quincy Adams and Clay, added: "He had taken office under Mr. Adams and that very office, too, which had been declared to be in the line of safe precedents—that very office which decided his preference of Mr. Adams. Sir, are we children? Are we babies? Can't we make out apple-pie without spelling and putting the letters together—a—p, ap, p—l—e, ple, apple, p—i—e, pie, apple-pie?" *Bouldin, 289.*

## P. 536 (a)

Randolph's failure of re-election to the United States Senate was partly due to the pride of character which made it difficult for him to consult the little arts of political conciliation. Writing to Littleton Waller Tazewell from Washington on Feb. 15, 1826, just after his election to the United States Senate, he said of the Virginia Legislature: "Of the 24 Senators, I knew 4; of the 216 Delegates, I knew 14 (8 of them from my late District); of the rest, to the best of my knowledge, I had never seen but one, M——n and B——h." *L. W. Tazewell, Jr. MSS.,*

## P. 538 (a)

The loss of influence which Randolph suffered from his extravagance in the Senate was all the more to be deplored in view of the fact that in one of his letters to Dr. John Brockenbrough he expressed the opinion that a seat in the Senate was certainly to be preferred to any other position in the Government. *Feb. 11, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 284.*

## P. 544 (a)

Randolph derived no little gratification from the fact that 20 years after his deposition from the Chairmanship of the Committee of Ways and Means of the House he was again made a member of that Committee. *Reg. of Deb., 1827-28, v. 4, Part 1, 1040.*

## P. 544 (b)

"What business," he said in a note to this speech, when referring to the judges who so far forgot their function as to take a prominent part in the proceedings of the Convention held at Richmond for the purpose of promoting the re-election of John Quincy Adams, "have these 'most forcible Feebles' in the van of election battles? Who gave them the right or the power to call conventions, forsooth, and excommunicate and anathematize their betters, in every point of view that gives value to the character of man? Let them stick to their dull, heavy, yet light, long-winded opinions in the Court of Appeals, where to our sorrow and to our cost they may play 'Sir Oracle'—where, when they ope their lips no dog must bark—but what they say must be received as law in the last resort—without appeal. No bill of exceptions can be tendered to their honors. Yes, let them keep to their privileged sanctuary. For if these men, who are great by title and office only, shall attempt to interfere with men at arms, let me tell them that their judicial astrology will stand them in little stead: 'There is no Royal road to the Mathematics': and these *ex officio* champions will fare like the delicate patrician troops of Pompey at the battle of Pharsalia. The Tenth Legion will aim at their faces—and our fair-weather knights must expect to meet with cracked crowns and bloody noses, and to staunch them as they may.

But have you no respect for the ermine? Yes, as I have for the lion's skin, but none at all for the ass beneath it. I was bred in a respect for the ermine, for I lived when Pendleton, Blair, and Wythe composed the 'High Court of Chancery' in Virginia. Yes, I respect the *pure* ermine of justice, when it is worn as it ought to be—and as it is by the illustrious judge who presides in the Supreme Court of the United States, with modest dignity and unpretending grace. I was bred in a respect for it approaching to religious reverence. But it is the unpolluted ermine that I was taught to venerate. Draggled in the vile mire of an election—reeking in the fumes of whiskey and tobacco—it is an object, not of reverence, but of loathing and disgust. 'A parson may not' (say the canons of many churches) 'use himself as a layman.' And a judge is, so to speak, a lay parson. He should keep himself emphatically 'unspotted from the world.'" *Bouldin, 312.*

## P. 560 (a)

The acoustics and the atmosphere of the House were chronic causes of irritation to Randolph. "We meet in a room," he declared on one occasion, "in which we can neither hear nor see." *A. of C., 1819-20, v. 1, 1066.* In a letter to James M. Garnett, he termed the House "Pandemonium where it is impossible to hear what is said or to read what is printed."



*Jan. 11, 1820, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* In one of his letters to Dr. Brockenbrough, he told him that the atmosphere of the House was visible and palpable, and that one might take it between his fingers like ill-ground meal.

*Apr. 10, 1828, Mrs. Gilbert S. Meem, MSS.* Long before that time he had written to St. George Tucker that he could compare the House of Representatives to nothing but the famous Dog Hole near Naples.

*March 13, 1810, Lucas MSS.*

P. 569 (a)

Seaton, the editor of the *National Intelligencer*, was of the opinion that the fear in which the tongue of Randolph was held in the House was an influence that counted not a little in the preservation of order in the House. John Quincy Adams took a very different view of the matter. Randolph, he thought, could no more keep order than he could keep silence. *Memoirs, v. 4, 532.*

P. 575 (a)

The close intercourse between man and pig disclosed by this narrative deprives one of Randolph's observations (made doubtless to an Irishman) of some of its humor: "Our pigs have not had the advantage of being reared as one of the family circle." *Nathan Loughborough MSS.*

P. 576 (a)

Nor was this the only thrifty territory between Washington and Richmond. "The surrounding country (at Fredericksburg) is in a high state of cultivation, and exceeded by none in fertility or beauty." *Sketches of Hist., &c., in the U. S., by a Traveller, 118 (1826).* And whatever else might be asserted of stage travel between Washington and Richmond, the vehicles and horses were capital. On May 18, 1826, Randolph said in the Senate: "I have never seen such fine teams, such good carriages in my life as on that road." *Niles Reg., July 1, 1826 v. 6 (3rd series), 326.*

P. 579 (a)

"Provisions are most abundant and cheap in Virginia. . . . The dinner this day, the 16th of February, was in all respects equal to Major Lomax' anticipations; consisting of roast turkey, a whole ham, roast beef, canvass back ducks, a pie of game, potatoes, hominy, etc." *Three Years in North America, by James Stuart (1833), v. 2, 50.*

P. 582 (a)

One accident is thus described in a letter from Randolph to James M. Garnett: "I was not in the least hurt. Just on this side of R. Kenna's my horse made a sudden start. The shaft, which was cracked before, as it appeared, cracked loudly. He attempted to run off and tried to kick, but I held him too closely. He had not got 50 yards when first one shaft and then the other gave way, and I tumbled into the road holding the reins, and stopped the horse, who turned round and looked at the mischief he had done



with little apparent alarm and no concern." *Dec. 27, 1827, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 583 (a)

"Major Lomax bought some canvass backs from the Hotel keeper at Occoquan, at a shilling, sterling, apiece." *Three Years in North America, by Jas. Stuart (1833), v. 2, 49.*

P. 592 (a)

The plan on which the still-hunt pursued by Eppes in 1811 was conducted was described by Randolph with his usual perspicacity in a letter to James M. Garnett, dated March 19, 1811: "My enemies, I find, have been playing a deep game, and have played it too with great skill and address. An emissary (P. C.) [Peter Carr] from the 'Old Man of the Mountain' [Jefferson] has been slyly moving about the country, visiting Yancey 'Judge' Johnson, etc. All the initiated have been busily at work like moles underground, and this has been and is their plan of operation; to assail me by every species of calumny and whisper, but Parthian-like never to show their faces or give battle on fixed ground; moving about from individual to individual and securing them man by man. On the day of election, a poll will be held for Mr. Eppes. This saves him the mortification of a defeat, while it secures him more votes than if he were to offer and have his pretensions fairly canvassed. It will operate as an irresistible invitation to the proffer of his future services at a subsequent election and serve as a standard by which to measure the probabilities of his success." *J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* "I should hate even the appearance of yielding to the Great Bashaw (Jefferson), but really I see no reason why I should be at so great expense of exertion and feeling when no adequate good can be obtained. In the long run, I suppose, the Government and the presses must break down any individual. I am sensible, too, that I subject my friends to persecution and proscription, and this consideration hurts me more than any other. It is a cruel thing to see men of merit overlooked and even oppressed because of their support of me." *Apr. 16, 1811, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 593 (a)

In 1811 Eppes obtained a majority of one over Randolph in Buckingham County; but, as Randolph obtained a decisive majority over him in the whole District, the one vote did not make out a case for the application of Nathaniel Macon's saying that a majority of one is the best majority in the world. *Sawyer, 41.* A good story is told of a Maryland Judge who was elected by a majority of two: "Your majority was very small," remarked one of his friends. "Small!" he answered warmly. "If one is a majority a majority twice as large is a hell of a majority!"

P. 597 (a)

"I remember Mr. Eppes, it is true," says the Rev. Wm. S. Lacy, when recalling a joint discussion between Eppes and Randolph to which he had

listened when he was 10 or 11 years old, "and was struck with his appearance as a polished gentleman, who fingered a gold-headed cane—the first that my childish eyes had ever beheld; but his speech made no impression on me, or, if it did, has long since been entirely forgotten. Mr. Randolph was the man I went to see; and I saw him, and heard him too. Much of his speech I remember to this day, though it has been more than 45 years ago." *Early Recollections of John Randolph, So. Lit. Mess., June, 1859, pp. 461-466.*

P. 601 (a)

As candidates, Carrington and Bruce were doubtless very much handicapped by the fact that they had been political friends of John Quincy Adams.

P. 609 (a)

"The franchise of suffrage in Virginia was confined to the freeholders, thus obviating in the public men the necessity of mingling with and courting the opinion of the multitude. The system, too, of electioneering was to address from the hustings the voters; to declare publicly the opinions of candidates, and the policy they proposed supporting. The vote was given *viva voce*. All concurred to make representative and constituent frank and honest. While this system existed, Virginia ruled the nation. These means secured the services of the first intellects and the first characters of her people. The system was a training for debate and public display. Eloquence became the first requisite to the candidate, and was the most powerful means of influence and efficiency in the representative." *The Memories of 50 Years, by W. H. Sparks, 236.*

P. 610 (a)

"Giles exhibits in his appearance no marks of greatness. He has a dark complexion and retreating eyes, black hair and robust form. His dress is remarkably plain, and in the style of Virginia carelessness. Having broken his leg a year or two since, he uses a crutch, and perhaps this adds somewhat to the indifference or doubt with which you contemplate him. But, when he speaks, your opinion immediately changes; not that he is an orator, for he has neither action nor grace, nor that he abounds in rhetoric or metaphor, but a clear, nervous impression, a well-digested and powerful condensation of language, give to the continual flow of his thoughts an uninterrupted expression. He holds his subject always before him and surveys it with untiring eyes. He points his objections with calculated force, and sustains his position with penetrating and wary argument. He certainly possesses great natural strength of mind, and, if he reason on false principles, or with sophistic evasions, he always brings to his subject a weight of thought which can be shaken or disturbed only by the attack of superior wisdom. I heard him a day or two since in support of a bill to define treason reported by himself. Never did I hear such all unHINGING and terrible doctrine. He laid the axe at the root of judicial power, and every stroke might be distinctly

felt. . . . He attacked Chief Justice Marshall with insidious warmth. Among other things, he said: 'I have learned that judicial opinions on this subject are like changeable silks, which vary their colors as they are held up in political sunshine.'" *Jos. Story to Sam'l P.P. Fay, Feb. 13, 1808, Story, by Story, v. 1, 158.*

P. 611 (a)

In his sketches of the Virginia Convention of 1829-30, Hugh R. Pleasants besides telling us that Robert Barraud Taylor was remarkable for his graceful manner, fine person and finished style of speaking, gives this description of Benjamin Watkins Leigh: "The man who of all others, with the exception of John Randolph, attracted the largest share of attention in that assembly was perhaps Benjamin Watkins Leigh. . . . Mr. Leigh was at that time in the prime of life, being about 48 years old. His faculties naturally very powerful, improved by continual study, rendered available by constant exercise at the Bar, have reached their highest point of perfection. An impassive disposition and a sanguine temper which never allowed him to despair, gave full force to an energy which apparently sought out difficulties for the mere love of the excitement produced by overcoming them. He was known to the public as a profound lawyer who had no superior at the Virginia Bar, and from his having been selected to compile the Code of 1819 was believed to be better acquainted with the history of Virginia legislation from the foundation of the Colony than any other person in the Convention. He was a small man, uncommonly well made, very graceful, with a hand that would have formed a study for Kneller; eyes of uncommon brilliancy; a forehead of striking beauty; hair as black as the wings of a raven, and glossy and fine as a lady's; and features which but for a nose somewhat too short would have been classically handsome. We heard it frequently remarked at this period of his life that his face bore a striking resemblance to the prints of Shakespeare, and we have ourselves been struck with the likeness. Mr. Leigh wore a thick-soled shoe on one foot; his leg having been broken many years before and never having recovered its proper length. This defect, instead of impairing the ease and grace of his general carriage, rather heightened their effect and contributed to render him what he undoubtedly was at that time a man of uncommonly striking appearance." *So. Lit. Mess., v. 17, 148, 149.*

P. 622 (a)

These words remind us of an attack of unparalleled violence made by Randolph upon the judge who acted as the Secretary of the Convention held at Richmond for the purpose of promoting the re-election of John Quincy Adams: "But what shall we say—not of the Secretary—no, it is needless to say anything of him," Randolph declared in one of the notes to a reprint of his speech on Retrenchment and Reform in the House in 1828. "His name, associated with that of Chapman Johnson, must be grateful to that distinguished luminary of the Bar and of Virginia. In our part of the country, we still retain the old-fashioned prejudice against the three degrees

of borrowing, begging and stealing. We still believe in Charlotte and Prince Edward that every honest man pays his just debts. If I were to go to Oakland (where I hope soon to be) and were to steal one of my friend Wm. R. Johnson's plow horses, value perhaps \$60.00, I should subject myself to the penitentiary. But would he not rather be robbed of a work horse than that any man should buy Medley or Sallie Walker of him for some thousands of dollars and never pay him? *Suum cuique tribuito* is still held in respect with us, and we pay small deference to the opinions of judges even in the last resort whose creditors cry aloud in vain for justice against the dispensers of justice—a judge who finally and conclusively determines between *meum* and *tuum* who possesses nothing *suum*." *Bouldin*, 311.

P. 635 (a)

In his *Autobiography*, Martin Van Buren says that the appointment of Randolph to the Russian Mission was made by Jackson at his instance. He told Jackson, he informs us, that he had a suggestion to make to him which would surprise him, and that his astonishment would probably be much increased when he assured him in advance that the step he was about to propose was one which he would neither take himself, if he were in his place, nor recommend to any other President, but that he thought that Jackson might take; although not without hazard. As to the reasons for this conclusion which Van Buren then gave to Jackson, the *Autobiography* adds: "They referred to the high estimation in which Mr. Randolph was held by the masses of the Old Republicans in Virginia, to his identification with that party from its commencement and his abiding attachment to it growing out of his active participation in its early contests, to the imposing manner in which he had discharged his duties as Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means during Mr. Jefferson's first term, and finally to his quarrel with Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and Adams, which would, if he died without some further opportunity to exert beneficially the remarkable capacities, intelligence, sagacity and knowledge of men which he possessed leave the world in the opinion that he had been an impracticable and unprofitable man." P. 418.

P. 646 (a)

A little later Van Buren wrote to Thomas Ritchie, the Editor of *The Enquirer*, as follows: "I have no reason to believe that the information in regard to Mr. Randolph's conduct at St. Petersburg has the slightest foundation in truth. I believe them, on the contrary, to be sheer misrepresentations. I regret, however, to inform you that Mr. Randolph's health on his arrival at St. Petersburg was so very bad as to render his immediate return to the South of France absolutely necessary for the preservation of his life. This he was authorized to do if the state of his health required it, and the affairs of the mission would admit of it without prejudice to the public service. In the exercise of this discretion he left St. Petersburg. . . . I have no doubt that his health is much worse

than it has been at any previous period, and that the severity of the climate of St. Petersburg was found to be insupportable by him." *Nov. 5, 1830, Van Buren Papers, Libr. Cong.*

P. 648 (a)

Nor is the idea which Bouldin (P. 70) attributes to W. B. Green, that a part of the Russian salary and outfit was used in the purchase of Randolph's Bushy Forest estate any better sustained by the facts, for this estate was purchased long before Randolph went to Russia.

P. 655 (a)

We are told by Martin Van Buren in his *Autobiography* that his reason for recommending the Russian Mission as a proper post for Randolph, under the circumstances, was that our relations with the Government of Russia were "simple and friendly." *P. 419.*

## VOLUME II

P. 5 (a)

The attacks made by Randolph on Judge Bouldin and Dr. Crump at this meeting are especially to be regretted, in view of the fact that Judge Bouldin had been one of his intimate friends, as Randolph's Diary and journals show; and Dr. Crump such a fiery partisan of his that when he met Samuel McDowell Moore, after the scurrilous speech which the latter had made against the re-election of Randolph to the United States Senate, he came to blows with him over the matter. "Watkins Leigh," Randolph once wrote to Dudley, "is well, much fattened and inspirited by matrimony. Bouldin, too, is here; a heavy draft from our country of abilities and integrity." *Jan. 24, 1814, Letters to a Y. R., 151.* Strange to say, it was when Judge Bouldin was announcing the death of Randolph, that he dropped dead in the middle of a sentence on the floor of the House of Representatives. *Letters and Times of the Tylers, by Tyler, v. 1. 507.*

P. 5 (b)

William M. Watkins voted against Randolph in 1813, and Randolph, perhaps, never entirely forgot the fact; though their relations, on the whole, remained those of good friends. On one occasion, Randolph expressed the conviction that but for Watkins' propensity to drink, he might have been, and ought to have been, and would have been, the first man in Charlotte County and Randolph's District, and (as far as Randolph knew) South of James River. *Letter from J. R. to H. A. Watkins, Jan. 24, 1832, Randolph Will Litigation at Petersburg.*

P. 6 (a)

Even were no allowance to be made for Randolph's intensive habits of speech, what he says about this tavern would hardly deserve the significance which sectional writers like Henry Adams and James Parton have hastened to impart to it: "The taverns along the road (from Boston to Washington)

were of a very indifferent description even for that day, when the best city hostelries were the horror of civilized travellers." *Life of Quincy*, 72. In other words, there were few good taverns or inns to be found anywhere in the United States in Randolph's time; and besides it is only fair to the poorer Virginia taverns and inns of that period to admit that their sorry quality was due to some extent to the generous habits of private hospitality which prevailed in Virginia. "The truth is," we are told by Dr. James Waddell Alexander, "'comfort' in Virginia is not at public but private houses; the case being reversed in Northern cities." *40 Yrs.' Letters*, v. 2, 213.

P. 10 (a)

John Randolph Bryan was told by Mrs. Wyatt Cardwell that, once when Randolph was under her husband's roof at Charlotte Court House at this time, he declared that he saw devils going up and down a stairway that landed in his room; and that she had had his bedstead moved around so that his back might be turned to the stairway; whereupon, after a time, he looked revived, and told her that she had changed his polarity, and, by doing so, saved his life. *J. R. B. to Mr. Robertson, March 27, 1878, Bryan MSS.*

P. 11 (a)

"The interest which you express in my well being and the anxiety which you have manifested for my safety demand every acknowledgment at my hands. I am not careless of life. I am perhaps more than sufficiently attached to it; but I do not, I cannot, value it so highly as to wish to hold it with dishonor." *J. R. to J. M. Garnett, July 5, 1806, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 14 (a)

The observations of Van Buren, in his *Autobiography*, on Randolph are deeply tinged by his knowledge of a confidential letter, which he says was written to Jackson by Randolph in an effort to create discord between Jackson and Van Buren, and especially by a series of letters, of which this may have been one, in which, Van Buren says, Randolph labored to divert Jackson from the purpose of making Van Buren his successor in the Presidency; and also, to some extent, by the chagrin resulting from the partisan clamor excited by the departure of Randolph from St. Petersburg. *Pp. 12 and 420.* But the *Autobiography* pays more than one striking tribute to Randolph's intellectual and social endowments. In one place Van Buren speaks of the "sparkling clearness" of his perceptions; in another place he tells us that, though Randolph was occasionally melancholy and irritable, he was generally lively, and, at times, remarkably fascinating. *Pp. 428, 430.* And in still another place he more than confirms what Sawyer has told us about Randolph's conversational characteristics and powers: "He avoided as a general rule the subjects under discussion in Congress, apparently glad to drop them and to recreate his mind in fresh fields. Except when something of unusual piquancy was afoot, and when left to himself, Virginia, her public men of earlier days, her people and her ast condition, the character, the life, of his deceased brother, Richard,

with England and the English, were commonly the themes on which he talked better than I ever heard another man talk." *P. 431.* The general estimate that Van Buren formed of Randolph's abilities and attainments is expressed in the *Autobiography* in these words: "That he was a man of extraordinary intelligence, well educated, well informed on most subjects, thoroughly grounded in the history and *rationale* of the Constitution and of the Government that was formed under it, eloquent in debate, and wielding a power of invective superior to that of any man of his day, is unquestionable; but with all these liberal endowments he lacked a balance wheel to regulate his passions and to guide his judgment." *P. 427.*

P. 15 (a)

Notwithstanding the coincidence of opinion which existed between Randolph and Calhoun in some respects, their relations were never thoroughly cordial; though there was a time when Calhoun spared no effort to conciliate the support of Randolph in his Presidential aspirations. "He is full of zeal, and almost makes love to Mr. M. (Macon) and another gent you wot of," Randolph wrote to Tazewell. "He thinks that he will use us for his ends. *Quant à moi* I shall go along with him very cheerfully until I come to the 'fork of the roads' that leads to my house, when, if he will go home with me, well! and welcome! If not, I shall go home." *Feb. 28, 1826, L. W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS.* In the first instance, Randolph was kept from forming any intimacy with Calhoun by their wide divergence on the subject of the War of 1812, and afterwards by the feud between Calhoun and Andrew Jackson. Evidence is not wanting, however, that Randolph had an underlying admiration for Calhoun, such as was indicated by his remark on one occasion that Calhoun was a strong man armed in mail. *Nathan Loughborough MSS.*

P. 19 (a)

A member of Mr. Seaton's family, writing from Virginia, early in 1833, says: "Mr. Randolph has been staying with us, but so feeble that he could not leave his room. He talks as much and as wonderfully as usual, and is, if possible, more witty and eccentric than ever. Cousin J. remarked to him that he was surprised to see him persist in the exploded fashion of wearing round-toed shoes. 'Oh,' replied Mr. Randolph, 'I am like Ritchie—I neither track the one way nor the other.'" *William Winston Seaton, A Biographical Sketch, 152.*

P. 21 (a)

In a letter to James M. Garnett written before this speech was made, Randolph, after saying that it was very plain to him that, if "Count Tariff" carried his project, the slave States would be better off as English colonies than nominal allies to his Countship, observed: "At this time I would not give one farthing for all the benefit that Virginia and North Carolina get from the General Government. The burthens which the British Parliament would have imposed upon us were feathers compared with brother



Jonathan's exactions; and a word in your ear—I had just as lief trust the one as the other; neither having the indispensable qualification of a common interest and common feeling with us." *Roanoke*, Nov. 1, 1823, J. M. Gannett, Jr., MSS.

P. 28 (a)

Of these resolutions, Martin Van Buren says in his *Autobiography*: "I do not believe that it was in the power of any one of our public men then on the stage of action to set forth the principles therein advocated in a manner so precise, lucid and statesmanlike as distinguished those resolutions." 424.

P. 29 (a)

At a meeting held at Buckingham C. H. a week later than this meeting, that is on Feb. 11, 1833, the suggestion that Randolph should become a candidate for Congress was "received with a deafening burst of applause." *Richm. Enquirer*, Feb. 28, 1833.

P. 31 (a)

"At Richmond, he made a long speech, sitting in his chair, praising Watkins Leigh and denouncing Thomas Ritchie and Daniel Webster." *Autobiog. of Martin Van Buren*, 425.

P. 46 (a)

Henry Adams, following *Garland* (v. 2, 375), sequaciously over the fence, says: "June 24, 1833"; (*John Randolph*, 305) but this is an error.

P. 46 (b)

In his *Reminiscences*, which passed into the possession of Dr. Philip Slaughter, of Culpeper County, Va., Dr. Francis West said: "His face, after death had closed his penetrative dark-brown eyes, resembled much that of an old woman."

P. 48 (a)

"I would not die in Washington," Randolph declared, "be eulogized by men I despise and buried in the Congressional Burying Ground. The idea of lying by the side of ——! Ah, that adds a new horror to death." *Figures of the Past*, by Josiah Quincy, 216.

P. 62 (a)

To all this might be added the declaration of Tristram Burges, of Rhode Island, in the House: "Genius he certainly has; for he is original and unlike all other men. If you please, he is eloquent, but, if so, the eloquence is like himself—*sui generis*." *Reg. of Deb.*, 1830-31, v. 7 494.

P. 63 (a)

"No collection of American speeches, however, has been deemed complete without some of them [Randolph's speeches]; though pronounced, as



to the most part, inaccurate by him; and imperfectly as they have come to us the impress of genius is upon them all." *National Portrait Gallery*, v. 4, *Title, Randolph*, p. 3.

P. 65 (a)

In a letter to David K. Este, a distinguished lawyer and citizen of Cincinnati, dated Washington, Feb. 15, 1916, John McLean, after dwelling with some pungency upon the length and discursiveness of Randolph's speeches in the House at that time, nevertheless concludes: "And yet, this extraordinary man generally commands attention. He speaks with great fluency, and his elocution is never perhaps surpassed. In invective he stands certainly unrivalled." *Louise E. Bruce MSS.*

P. 79 (a)

Evidence of the fact that Randolph lacked the egotism to be intolerant of criticism conceived in a proper spirit is also to be found in the patient manner with which he accepted the harsher part of Gilmer's sketch of himself as an orator, in which Gilmer even stated that someone who had lately heard Randolph in the House had compared him to an exhausted crater. The letter from Randolph to Gilmer which touched upon this subject is one of the best that he ever wrote. *Century Mag.*, v. 29, 714.

P. 99 (a)

"How every idle word I utter flies abroad upon the wings of the wind, I know not." *J. R. to Dr. John Brockenbrough, Dec. 21, 1827, Garland*, v. 2, 295.

P. 101 (a)

"Who is that?" inquired Mr. Randolph [at an election]. "Mr. Beasley," responded someone in the crowd. "Ah, yes," said Mr. Randolph, "the old one-eyed sleigh-maker, who lives on Sandy Creek." *Century Magazine*, v. 29, 1895-96, 718.

P. 107 (a)

Another version of this story is: "John, when you go down into the world, if you hear anyone say there is no God, tell him that I say he is a liar." *Nathan Loughborough MSS.*

P. 112 (a)

The contrast between the thrifty face of the earth in the Free States and the conditions bred by the listless and benumbing spirit of slave labor was very fully presented in a Quaker Memorial laid before the Delaware Legislature in 1826; (*Gazetteer of the U. S.*, April 16 1826); but by no one was the contrast ever more lucidly and pointedly stated than by Robert Goodloe Harper, whose life was passed in Virginia, South Carolina and Maryland: "In population, in the general diffusion of wealth and comfort, in public and private improvement, in the education, manners and mode of life of

the middle and laboring classes, in the face of the country, in roads, bridges and inns, in schools and churches, in the general advancement of improvement and prosperity, there is no comparison. The change is seen the instant you cross the line that separates the country where there are slaves from that where there are none. Whence does this arise? I answer from this—that in one division of the country the land is cultivated by freemen for their own benefit, and in the other almost entirely by slaves for the benefit of their masters." *A. of C.*, 1819–20, v. 2, 1428.

Returning from Virginia to Philadelphia in 1815, Randolph said: "We are not only centuries behind our Northern neighbors, but at least 40 years behind ourselves." *Letter to James M. Garnett, Feb. 10, 1815, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* It was only from local pride, political policy or other similar reasons that he was not always willing to admit that slavery was the true cause for this fact. Sometimes, when the term "slave-holder" was used reproachfully in the House, he would refer pointedly to one of his colleagues as "my fellow-slaveholder"; and, when the London consignees of his tobacco and slave-factors of his father urged him to liberate his slaves, he silenced them by saying: "Yes, you buy and set free to the amount of the money you have received from my father and his estate for these slaves, and I will set free an equal number." *30 Years' View by Benton, (1864), 475.*

#### P. 117 (a)

After recalling these friendly observations upon the Southern people, it is gratifying to remember that sensible and fair-minded men were not lacking at the South either to bear cordial testimony to the merits of New England. Dr. John Holt Rice visited it in 1822 and he was deeply impressed by the religious zeal, the intellectual enlightenment, the public spirit and the order and decorum of its inhabitants. Among other agreeable experiences of a social nature, he was much pleased with "the frank, easy and graceful" manners of the people of Hartford, and the hospitality of Col. J. C. T——k, of Springfield, he said, falling back upon his Virginia standards, would have done honor to a Southern planter. *Memoir of Dr. John Holt Rice, by Maxwell, 214, et seq.*

Writing to Dr. Hall from Charlotte Court House in 1840, Dr. James Waddell Alexander said of Benjamin Watkins Leigh: "I heard him pronounce a most cordial, discriminating and copious eulogy on the people of Massachusetts." *Forty Yrs.' Familiar Letters; v. 1. 314.*

The father of the author was a student at Harvard a little later, and, while a thorough-going Virginia planter in all his social characteristics and political convictions, often descanted in the presence of his children until his death in 1896 upon the admirable virtues of the New England character.

#### P. 118 (a)

In 1828 Randolph stated in the House that \$5,000 would build what was considered a first rate house in his part of the country.

## P. 121 (a)

In his letters to Theodore Dudley, Randolph mentions two cases in which James Bruce, when in Richmond on business, became so absorbingly engaged in the task of loading his wagons, or otherwise, as quite to forget engagements to dine; once with Dr. Brockenbrough and once with a Mr. T., another host of Randolph. "But," concludes Randolph in telling the incidents, "I am growing scandalous." *Nov. 18, 1815, Letters to a Y. R., 171.*

## P. 125 (a)

"Once a wife, always a wife, except in very severe cases where the Legislature did sometimes, but rarely, grant a divorce," was declared by Randolph on one occasion in the House to be the matrimonial rule in Virginia. *A. of C., 1816-17, v. 2, 806.*

## P. 127 (a)

Of certain of the non-freeholding whites in his District, Randolph is said to have once declared in the Senate: "If you take the upper classes of the blacks, and the lower classes of the whites, the former is the most moral, virtuous and intelligent man. I mean to confine myself to the slaves and not to the free blacks." *Niles Register, Aug. 26, 1828, 454.* But these words were part of an unrevised text which was given to the world by the *National Intelligencer* and *Niles* under circumstances that strongly suggest malicious garbling. Nor should it be forgotten that, even if they were spoken as written, it was no uncommon thing for the pride of the large Southern slaveholder to laud unduly the virtues of his negroes and to emphasize unduly the shortcomings of the indigent whites, towards whom his negroes were as arrogant as they were obsequious to him. "The best slaves that I have ever seen," Randolph once wrote to James M. Garnett, "are the Catholic negroes of Maryland, who are like the Irish peasant implicitly guided by the priest." *Nov., 24, 1832, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

## P. 137 (a)

Some months after Randolph had been elected in 1811, he entered in his Diary these words: "Heard Dr. Hoge from Luke XXIV, 42. Very great."

## P. 147 (a)

The fact that Southside Virginia was, in Randolph's time still, in some respects, a frontier country, is brought to our notice very characteristically when we read a letter in which he told Theodore Dudley that Barksdale on his way home from Petersburg had been soused in Skinny Creek, and had nearly perished from cold. *Jan. 17, 1822, Letters to a Y. R., 235.*

## P. 148 (a)

Two exceptions springing from two of the most conspicuous families of Virginia are mentioned by Anburey and John Randolph, respectively. *P. 385, and Letter from J. R. to Dr. John Brockenbrough, Feb. 10, 1826, J. C. Grinnan MSS.*

## P. 158 (a)

But it is a mistake to think of the climate of Southside Virginia as being always more or less moderate in winter. In 1829, Randolph wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough from Oakland, the home of his friend Wm. R. Johnson, in Chesterfield County, Va., that cattle were perishing from the bitter weather. *March 26, 1829, Mo. Hist. Soc.* "I see through the window the ox that draws our firing wood," diarizes Richard N. Venable, on Jan. 12, 1792. "See how he holds down his head to the weather, and, as he slowly moves through the snow with silent gravity and humility, joins all nature in acknowledging that it is winter." Not an ineffective touch for a diarist who was neither painter nor poet, but simply a vagrant country lawyer.

## P. 164 (a)

"Tobacco, situated as we are, is the best crop that we can cultivate. Too far from market for wheat,—no range for stock—it is that precise point where the plant can thrive to advantage." *July 24, 1813, J. R. to J. M. Garnett, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* Among Randolph's letters to Garnett is another addressed to him as "Corn-planter," in which he gives him quite detailed instructions as to the best methods of tobacco culture. This letter is a capital illustration of the firm grasp which Randolph had upon the practical side of every subject that interested him.

## P. 167 (a)

In Randolph's time the wheat was separated from the husk at Roanoke by the primitive process of treading. *Diary of J. R.*

## P. 173 (a)

The conditions were no better at Yale and Princeton in the first half of the nineteenth century. Describing a Fourth of July dinner at Yale, John Marsh, who entered that institution in 1800, says: "The result was *Io Bacche*—the triumph of Bacchus." *Temperance Progress of the Century*, by Wooley and Johnson, 46. "We have dozens of young men in and about Princeton," Dr. James Waddell Alexander wrote to Dr. Hall on March 31, 1840, "who are drunk every little while, and always on wine." *v. 1, 299.* If anything, dissipation was still more rampant at the University of Virginia. *Hist. of U. of Va., by Philip A. Bruce, v. 2. 279, et seq.* Indeed Gaillard Hunt goes so far as to say that in the early part of the nineteenth century "Indulgence in strong drink was the curse of every class and every section." *Life in America 100 Years Ago, 104.*

## P. 190 (a)

The well-known Presbyterian divine of Scotch origin who was at one time the President of Davidson College in North Carolina, and afterwards, from 1866 to 1885, the professor of Moral Philosophy at the present Washington & Lee University, at Lexington, Va. He was also at one stage of his career a Moderator of the Southern Presbyterian Church.

## P. 197 (a)

The idea has obtained currency that Randolph used this simile in regard to Henry Clay, but there is, we believe, no real authority for it.

## P. 200 (a)

The real motive, which impelled Randolph to worry Chapman Johnson so viciously in the Virginia Convention of 1829-30, was the fact that Johnson had been the author of the manifesto of the Convention held in Richmond for the purpose of promoting the re-election of John Quincy Adams. Referring in his speech on Retrenchment and Reform in the House, in 1828, to the extent to which Adams had condoned the military excesses of Andrew Jackson, Randolph said: "What shall we say to a gentleman . . . filling a large space in the eye of his native State, who should with all the adroitness of a practiced advocate gloss over the acknowledged encroachments of the men in power upon the fair construction of the Constitution, and then present the appalling picture, glaring and flaming, in his deepest colors, of a bloody military tyrant—a raw-head and bloody-bones—so that we cannot sleep in our beds; who should conjure up all the images that can scare children or frighten old women—I mean very old women, Sir—and who offers this wretched caricature—this vile daub, where brick-dust stands for blood, like Peter Porcupine's Bloody Buoy, as a reason for his and our support in Virginia of a man in whom he has no confidence, whom he *damns with faint praise*—and who moreover—tell it not in Gath! had zealously and elaborately (I cannot say ably) justified every one of these very atrocious and bloody deeds?" *Bouldin, 296*. The quotation used by Randolph in this speech from some undisclosed source at least suggests one substantial reason why Chapman Johnson, one of the greatest lawyers ever known to Virginia, and a powerful figure in the Virginia Convention of 1829-30, never acquired more prominence in the field of politics. "It is his pride and honest and honorable pride," the individual quoted by Randolph declared, "which makes him delight to throw himself into minorities, because he enjoys more self-gratification from manifesting his independence of popular opinion than he could derive from anything in the gift of the people." In other words, in the cant phrases of our time, he was "a mug-wump," an "intellectual."

## P. 202 (a)

John Hampden Pleasants was the son of James Pleasants, "the unworthy son of a worthy sire," Randolph dubbed him; (*Nathan Loughborough MSS.*) another way of saying that he was the Whig son of a Democratic father. It is said that, meeting Randolph on Pennsylvania Avenue, in Washington, Pleasants placed himself directly in front of him, exclaiming loudly as he did so: "I don't get out of the way of puppies." Stepping instantly aside, Randolph replied: "I always do, pass on." *Recollections of a Long Life, by Joseph Packard, 110.*

## P. 203 (a)

Two clever utterances of Randolph have been preserved for us in the recently published *Autobiography* of Martin Van Buren. At one time, Walter Lowrie was the Secretary of the Senate. His reading was certainly not of the best, and his penmanship was egregious, Van Buren tells us; but in more important respects he discharged the duties of his office with eminent success. Of him, Randolph said, that, although he could neither read nor write, he was the best *clerk* that any public body had ever been favored with. P. 238. Once, when Van Buren referred the party disloyalty of John Holmes, of Maine, to a deadly attack made by John Randolph upon him, Randolph replied vehemently: "I deny that. I have not driven him away. He was already a deserter in his heart. If you examine the body, you will find that *the wound is in the back.*" P. 206.

## P. 208 (a)

If, for no other reason, Randolph's speeches can be read with pleasure because of the way in which language in the forge of his exalted moods of glowing improvisation becomes as ductile as gold. An illustration is a paragraph in one of his later speeches: "An anathema, Sir, has been issued from the laboratory of the modern Vatican; and a Nuncio has been dispatched (I believe I must drop the metaphor, or it will drop me). Well, Sir, an agent then, has been dispatched." *Reg. of Debates, 1827-28, v. 4, Part I, 1040.*

## P. 209 (a)

Randolph was on such familiar terms with his constituents that he sometimes singled one of them out from his audience and addressed a question to him: "Captain Price," he once called out to one of his venerable friends from the rostrum, "turn round a moment? How many acres in that old field?" "Between 100 and 150, I presume," was the reply. "Now tell me Nat. Price," continued Randolph, "here before all your neighbors, can you enclose that old field with 10 panels of fence?" "No, no indeed," shouted the crowd. "And yet," said Randolph, "I am to be turned out of office because I will not waste your money to do what can no more be done than Nat. Price can enclose this old field with ten panels of fence." *Recollections of Wm. S. Lacy, So. Lit. Mess., June, 1859, 461-466.*

## P. 210 (a)

"I never prepared myself to speak, but on two questions—The Connecticut Reserve and the first discussion of the Yazoo claims." *Letter from J. R. to Francis W. Gilmer, Century Mag., (1895-96), v. 29, 713.*

## P. 212 (a)

This was Jacob Crowninshield, who was secretary of the Navy at the time while Jefferson was President. It was upon the head of his brother, Benjamin W. Crowninshield, who filled the same post under Madison and Monroe, that Randolph emptied the vials of his wrath in a note to his speech

on Retrenchment and Reform in 1828: "Benjamin W. Crowninshield, the Master Slender—no the Master Silence of Ministers of State. Shakespeare himself could go no lower. It is the thorough base of human nature. He seems to us to have drawn Robert Shallow, Esquire and his cousin, Slender as the comparative and superlative degree of fatuity; and, when we believe that he has sounded his lowest note, as if revelling in the exuberance of his power, he produces Silence, as the *Ne plus ultra* of inanity and imbecility." *Bouldin*, 316.

P. 213 (a)

Another good example of Randolph's clever way of putting things is the observations drawn from him in 1809 by the fact that Berent Gardenier, a Federalist, had pushed his defense of England further than even he could approve as a matter of good tactics, if not of principle. "I looked," he said, "at the gentleman from New York at that moment, with a sort of sensation which we feel in beholding a sprightly child meddling with edge tools, every moment expecting what actually happened—that he would cut his fingers." *A. of C.*, 1808-09, v. 3, 1464.

P. 213 (b)

Randolph's clever reply to his critics is well known: "A caterpillar comes to a fence; he crawls to the bottom of the ditch and over the fence, some of his hundred feet always in contact with the subject upon which he moves. A gallant horseman at a flying leap clears both ditch and fence. "Stop," says the caterpillar, "you are too flighty, you want connection and continuity. It took me an hour to get over, you can't be as sure as I am, who have never quitted the subject, that you have overcome the difficulty and are fairly over the fence." "Thou miserable reptile," replies our fox-hunter, "if like you, I crawled over the earth slowly and painfully should I ever catch a fox or be anything more than a wretched caterpillar?" N.B. He did not say "of the law." *Bouldin*, 310.

P. 219 (a)

"Yet as regards the interests of my country—of the State of Virginia," are among the words employed by Randolph in one of his speeches in the House. *Reg. of Debates*, 1827-28; V. 4, Part 1, 966.

P. 226 (a)

The other States of the Union undoubtedly owe much to New England and Virginia, but those two parts of the Union are at least not a little indebted to them for the patience with which they have borne their favorable opinions of themselves. "O, New England," breaks out Noah Webster in his Diary, after a visit to Virginia, "how superior are thy inhabitants in morals, literature, civility and industry!" *Notes on the Life of Noah Webster*, by E. E. F. Ford; V. 1, 146 (note 3). After telling Creed Taylor that he had seen Lafayette, Samuel Taylor, a prominent citizen of Southside Virginia, observes: "In his manners there is great simplicity. They



must have been formed by the manners of the Virginia gentlemen with whom he associated in our Revolutionary War." *Oct. 31, 1824, Creed Taylor Papers.*

P. 227 (a)

Perhaps, however, the import of this remark was misunderstood by Quincy; for Randolph long cherished a most earnest desire to make a tour of New England, which he repeatedly expressed in his correspondence. In a letter to James M. Garnett from Richmond, he said: "I should like to 'reside here' a part of the year; but then I should like still better an excursion to the Eastern States, or a trip to Europe. Both are denied by my situation." *May 14, 1814, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 228 (a)

"The history of that period, the accounts given by both sides are replete with evidence of the efficient part taken by him (Randolph) in the contests of the day and the sacrifices to which he was exposed from their violence." *Autobiog. of Martin Van Buren, 429.*

P. 229 (a)

"Varnum has much against my wishes removed Randolph from the Ways and Means and appointed Campbell of Tennessee. It was improper as related to the public business, and will give me additional labor." *Gallatin, by Adams, 363.*

P. 232 (a)

Perhaps, however, the idea may have originated with Jefferson; for on Dec. 13, 1803, he wrote to Gallatin: "In order to be able to meet a general combination of the banks against us in a critical emergency, could we not make a beginning towards an independent use of our own money, towards holding our own bank in all the deposits where it is received, and letting the Treasurer give his draft or note for payment at any particular place, which in a well-conducted government ought to have as much credit as any private draft or bank-note or bill and would give us the same facilities which we derive from the banks?" *Life of Jefferson, by Randall, v. 3, 93.*

P. 240 (a)

"The deil cam' fiddling through the town  
And danced awa wi' the exciseman  
An ilka wife cried 'Auld Mahoun  
I wish you luck o' the prize man'!"

P. 241 (a)

It was not Randolph extolling Virginia, but Quincy extolling Massachusetts, who used these words: "Sir, I confess it, the first public love of my heart is the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; there is my fireside; there are the tombs of my ancestors.



'Low lies the land, yet blest with fruitful stores  
 Strong are her sons, though rocky are her shores,  
 And none are! none so lovely to my sight,  
 Of all the lands which heaven o'erspreads with light.'

The love of this Union rose out of this attachment to my native soil, and is rooted in it. I cherish it because it affords the best external hope of her peace, her prosperity, her independence." *A. of C.*, 1810-11 v. 3, 542.

P. 246 (a)

"Northern gentlemen think to govern us by our black slaves; but let me tell them we intend to govern them by their white slaves." These words have been imputed to Randolph. *Life of Quincy*, by Quincy, 66. But, were they ever really spoken by him?

P. 247 (a)

There is a reference to the author of these reminiscences in Dr. James Waddell Alexander's *Forty Years Familiar Letters* to Dr. Hall. "The Episcopal Clergy hereabouts," he says, "are all evangelical and hard working men. John Clark, who preaches nearest here, cannot I suppose make the circuit of his preaching places without riding 60 miles." V. 1, 272. This good man was the son of Col. John Clark, of Mount Laurel, Halifax County, Va., one of the wealthiest land owners in that part of Virginia; but he put aside every lure of wealth, or high family position to give himself up to the sacred calling which took him over such an extensive territory. On one occasion, when he was to preach at St. Andrew's, in Mecklenburg County, Va., a man on his way from the other side of the river to hear him said to one of the Mecklenburg Alexanders: "I made up my mind to attend and take dinner with you, for I wished to hear a man preach and talk who made a market crop of 150,000 pounds of tobacco and five thousand bushels of wheat." *MSS. Memoirs of Mark Alexander, Jr., owned by Mrs. W. Kennedy Boone of Baltimore, Md.*

P. 253 (a)

Yet William M. Watkins, who was one of Randolph's neighbors and friends, testified in the Randolph Will Litigation with no little truth: "Mr Randolph was very unforgiving in his temper. It was the principal fault in his character."

P. 256 (a)

Or, as Randolph once said in a letter to Dr. Brockenbrough, "never could have made a gin horse." *Dec. 17, 1828, Garland*, v. 2, 315.

P. 260 (a)

In the Randolph Will Litigation, William M. Watkins, who knew Randolph intimately, testified that he would never have attempted to shut up Robert Carrington in the manner he did, if he had not been insane.

## P. 262 (a)

The following entries taken from Randolph's journal of 1830 (*Va. Hist. Soc.*) show that the relations between him and Robert Carrington shortly before the Russian Mission of Randolph were very neighborly and friendly:

"Feb. 13, 1830. Killed beef, fore qr. to Robt. Carrington."

"May 21, 1830. Robt. C. to dinner."

## P. 269 (a)

This loan remained unpaid when the time came for the reconveyance to Randolph of a tract of land and a number of slaves, which Randolph had conveyed to Beverley Tucker about the time of his marriage as a contribution towards the support of the newly-wedded couple; subject to the promise that they would be so reconveyed. The land was reconveyed, but Beverley declined to reconvey the slaves on the ground that Judge Coalter had told him that St. George Tucker intended the slaves to be retained by Beverley in payment of the debt due by Randolph to him. *Testimony of William Leigh, in Coalter's Exor. vs. Randolph's Exor., Clk's Office, Cir. Ct., Petersburg, Va.*

## P. 270 (a)

This inference is strengthened by the fact that the slaves which Theodorick Bland gave to Mrs. Eaton, Mrs. Randolph's sister, he secured to her and her children. Testimony of Mrs. Anna Bland Dudley in the Randolph Will Litigation.

## P. 273 (a)

In a letter to St. George Tucker, Randolph wrote: "Of Morris I will state an opinion which occurred to me most forcibly whilst he was speaking, that a fine gentleman has destroyed a great orator." *Jan. 15, 1802, Lucas MSS.*

## P. 282 (a)

Herman Blennerhassett has something to say of the mistress of Presque Isle in his journal, under date of Oct. 18, 1807: "I there (at Mrs. Chevalier's) met Mrs. David Randolph, who is a middle-aged lady and very accomplished; of charming manners and possessing a masculine mind. From this lady, the near relation of the President, and whose brother is married to his daughter, I heard more pungent strictures upon Jefferson's head and heart, because they were better founded, than any I had ever heard before, and she certainly uttered more treason than *my wife* ever dreamed of, for she ridiculed the experiment of a republic in this country, which the vices and inconstancy of parties and the people had too long shown to be nothing more than annual series of essays to complete a work ill-begun, and which appeared to be nearly worn out before it was half-finished. But 'she always was disgusted with the fairest ideas of a modern republic, however she might respect those of antiquity.' And as for the treason 'she cordially hoped whenever Burr or anyone else again attempted

to do anything the Atlantic States would be comprised in the plan." *The Blennerhassett Papers*, 458.

P. 292 (a)

"Enclosed is a draft for \$300. May it afford every pleasure and profit. I wish it were a cipher more." *J. R. to Tudor Randolph, Richmond, Dec. 31, 1813, J. C. Grinnan MSS., Annual Register, 1832, 33, 440.*

P. 295 (a)

Whatever Randolph or Ogden, or anyone else may have thought of Mr. Morris, there can be no question that her aged husband had no fault to find with her. Two years after his marriage to her, he wrote to his intimate friend, John Parish, then at Bath, England: "Perhaps some wind may yet waft you over the bosom of the Atlantic, and then you shall become acquainted with my wife, and you shall see that fortune—fortune? No! the word befits not a sacred theme—let me say the bounty of Him who has been to me unsparingly kind—gilds with a celestial beam the tranquil evening of my day." Some 18 months after the date of Mrs. Morris' reply to Randolph, he wrote again to Parish as follows: "I lead a quiet, and more than most of my fellow-mortals, a happy, life. The woman to whom I am married has much genius, has been well educated, and possesses, with an affectionate temper, industry and love of order." *Life of Gouverneur Morris, by Jared Sparks, v. 1, 494, 495.*

P. 298 (a)

In a letter to Joseph C. Cabell, dated Oct. 14, 1831, Mrs. Morris said that, if she held out until her son was of age, he would do very well, notwithstanding all the fraud and falsehoods of David Ogden (a grandnephew of her husband) "whose humble tool Jack Randolph became—a man who cheated his own mother." *Univ. of Va. Libr. MSS.* We know of no evidence to warrant such a charge against Ogden, but the testimony of William Leigh in the Randolph Will Litigation leaves no room for doubt that it was Ogden who convinced Randolph that Mrs. Morris was leading a licentious life. Leigh deposed that in 1815 Randolph had read to him some of the contents of a letter which he had written to Mr. and Mrs. Morris; that he asked him why he had written such a singular letter, and that Randolph said that he had been persuaded to write it by Ogden, and had written it because Mr. Morris had treated Tudor Randolph with great kindness, and that he thought that he ought to inform him of the character of his wife.

P. 299 (a)

Though Mrs. Morris met with as little success in her effort to utilize the grudge that the Cabell brothers had against Randolph to promote her own grudge against him as she had experienced in her effort to avail herself of the quarrel between Randolph and Giles for the same purpose, it cannot be denied that she had a promising field for her experiment; for the language employed by Randolph in one of the notes which he affixed to a reprint

of his speech on Retrenchment and Reform in the House in 1828, about William H. Cabell was as belittling as any that even his scale of satirical *diminuendo* could supply. "We have no faith on the Southside of James River," he said, "in the President who called or him (William H. Cabell) who presided over the Richmond Adams Convention—the successor in form of Pendleton and Spencer Roane. Lichas wielding the club of Hercules, a man who does not endeavor to make up by assiduity and study for the slenderness of his capacity and his utter want of professional learning . . . Mr. C. is as strong an instance of this (the fortuitous force of circumstances) as Shakespeare himself could have adduced. Hardly a second rate lawyer at the County Court Bar of Amherst and Buckingham, sheer accident made him Governor of Virginia; happening then to be a member of the Assembly (when a very obnoxious character was held up for the office); possessing good temper and amiable manners, and most respectable and powerful connections—the *untying of a member's shoe* caused him to be pitched upon to keep out the only candidate. With that exception the office was going a-begging. Conducting himself most unexceptionally and inoffensively as Governor, he had a county, and one of the finest too in the State, named after him (if it had been called after his uncle, Old Colonel Will Cabell of Union Hill, all would have cried well done! Posterity it is to be hoped will know no better) and was advanced to the Court of Appeals, of which he bids fair to be President; a court in which if he had remained at the Bar he most probably would never have obtained a brief." *Bouldin*, 312. This, of course, is largely caricature, but it can at least be said in defense of Randolph that the Chairmanship of a political convention was certainly no place for a judge.

P. 305 (a)

This was not the only occasion on which the hero of Tippecanoe aroused Randolph's sense of the ludicrous. "For which of my sins," he wrote to Theodore Dudley, "it is I know not that I have sustained this long and heavy persecution (by a manoeuvring lady) more hot and galling than the dreadful *fire* which killed *nine* of General Harrison's mounted rifleman." *Jan. 24, 1814, Letters to a Y. R., 150.*

P. 313 (a)

Randolph had more than one prejudice to overcome before he could become truly friendly to Pinkney. When the latter was appointed to supplement Monroe in his negotiations with the British Court, Randolph wrote to James M. Garnett: "I hope that Mr. Monroe . . . will have concluded all matters with the Court of London before that Federal interloper, P., can arrive to share the honor which does not belong to him." *May 11, 1806, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 315 (a)

The imprisonment of Aaron Burr in Richmond at the time of the Burr Trial elicited this tristful observation from Randolph: "He was last night

lodged in the common town jail (we have no State prison except for convicts) where I dare say he slept sounder than I did." *Richmond, June 25, 1807, Letter to Jos. H. Nicholson, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.*

P. 322 (a)

Another reference by Burges to the same subject—so vague as to suggest a boy who has loaded a gun but is not quite certain enough of himself to let it off—is supposed by his enthusiastic biographer to have had such a cowering effect upon Randolph that he immediately left the House and never raised his voice in it again. "Sir, Divine Providence takes care of his own Universe. Moral monsters cannot propagate . . . Impotent of everything but malevolence of purpose, they can no otherwise multiply miseries than by blaspheming all that is pure and prosperous and happy. Could demon propagate demon, the Universe might become a Pandemonium; but I rejoice that the Father of Lies can never become the Father of Liars. One adversary of God and man is enough for one Universe. Too much! Oh! how much for one nation!" *Memoir of Tristram Burges, by Henry L. Bowen 105.*

P. 331 (a)

There is much additional testimony in regard to the extent to which Randolph retained his brilliant faculties even when demented. "He spoke as clearly and brilliantly as I have ever heard him," Wm. M. Watkins testified in the Randolph Will Litigation as to the conversation of Randolph in the early part of 1832. According to William B. Banks, of Halifax Co., Va., after Randolph's return from Russia, he was "splendidly mad." *George P. Coleman, MSS.*

P. 332 (a)

A part of the testimony, rendered by General Winfield Scott in the Randolph Will Litigation, has an important bearing on this point. Once, he says, Randolph in his desire to let him realize just how he would have answered an antagonist in the House (Daniel Sheffey), if he had had the full chance to do so, asked him to sit as Speaker to hear his reply. Then for thirty minutes or more Randolph poured forth as rich a volume of indignant and yet connected eloquence as the General had ever heard from his lips, but soon mistook him in his vehemence for his antagonist in the debate, with the result that the General had some difficulty before leaving him for the night to disabuse his mind of its impression.

P. 344 (a)

The good will of Randolph for the people of Amelia County was not so far won by the kindness, of which he was the recipient in that County, that he could not say of them in a letter to Theodore Dudley: "Those people dislike business, love amusement, and the issue need not be foretold." *Jan. 17, 1822, Letters to a Y. R., 236.*

## P. 344 (b)

Writing to James M. Garnett from Roanoke, on Nov. 1, 1823, Randolph said: "I am embosomed in woods—oaks, hickories, elms, pines, black gums, red buds, &c., grapevine, sweet briars, green briars, &c., and nothing can be more charming than their present appearance. One thriving young oak 'occludes' (as St. Thomas of Cantingbury would say) the only window of my bed chamber whose shutters are unclosed at night, and the effect is so grateful that when I sleep abroad, on awaking in the morning, I feel as if I had come out of darkness to a strong artificial light." *James M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

## P. 352 (a)

"After dinner I sit over my fruit and wine without the company even of a solitary fly. These, although I can't manage their Hessian namesakes, I have nearly extirpated here." *J. R. to James M. Garnett, Roanoke, Sept. 10, 1823, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

## P. 353 (a)

The missing element in the Roanoke larder was an abundance of fish. At that time, of course, fish could not be transported for any great distance, and, apparently, shad and other sea fish were unable to run up the Roanoke higher than a certain plantation just above Weldon, where they were caught in vast numbers; but this was many miles below Roanoke. *Reminiscences of John Randolph Bryan, Bryan MSS.* The Staunton itself is usually very muddy and is stocked mainly with the fish known locally as the "Red-eye," the "River Jack" and the "Sorrel Horse." "This climate," Randolph once wrote to James M. Garnett, "has avenged the wrongs of my red ancestors as the gullies, old fields and rivers of mud (fishless) have that of the African slave trade. God is just! Crime insures punishment!" *March 4, 1826, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* Fish, usually a single one, and once a "Red-eye" a foot long, are mentioned occasionally in Randolph's journals. A gift of a fish, which a man whom he hardly knew had sent him from a point 8 miles away, was received by him gratefully enough to be noted in one of his letters to Dr. Brockenbrough. *Roanoke, May 15, 1827, Garland, v. 2, 291.*

## P. 354 (a)

"Immediately after the adjournment (of Congress)," Randolph once wrote to Dr. Brockenbrough, "I shall travel—perhaps take a sea voyage, not to get rid of duns (although the wolf will be at my door in the shape of the man I bought that land of) but to take the only chance of prolonging a life that I trust is *now* not altogether useless." *Feb. 23, 1820, Garland, v. 2, 132.*

## P. 357 (a)

Buck Spring, Macon's home in North Carolina, presented very much the same glaring incongruity as Roanoke. Randolph's idea of living in two

houses was improved upon to such an extent that a group of no less than a half dozen log structures constituted the domestic establishment of Macon; one of which served as a kitchen, another as a dining room; and so on; but, crude as these buildings were, he is said to have possessed a large quantity of old wine, silver, cut glass and fine linen; and a stud of thoroughbreds at which even Randolph could hardly have cavilled. *Life of Jefferson, by Randall, v. 2, 665, (note 1)*. It may well be doubted whether a more virtuous man than Macon ever held public office in the history of the United States, and to his goodness and tenderness of heart, not unlike that of Abraham Lincoln, together with his native wisdom and quaint felicity of speech, was due the fact that his hold upon the confidence and affection of the people of North Carolina was so tenacious. That such a man should have cherished a love so profound for Randolph is proof enough that, whatever may have been the rind of Randolph's character, its core was essentially sound. To James M. Garnett Randolph once wrote of Macon: "His innumerable, nameless little attentions and kindnesses, springing directly from the heart, shews that age has no power in chilling his benevolent feelings." *Dec. 31, 1822, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* And Thomas H. Benton testified in the Randolph Will Litigation that, when Randolph's mind was unhinged, the fact that Macon observed it was manifest only "in an increased kindness and soothing tenderness."

P. 357 (b)

It is manifest that the total value of Randolph's estate depends not a little on the average figure that is employed in multiplying the whole number of his slaves. The prevailing prices for negroes in Southside Virginia in 1828 was, say \$250.00 for a young woman, and \$300.00 to \$400.00 for a young man. *James Bruce to M. Brame, Oct. 13, 1828, Malcolm G. Bruce MSS.* But in 1828 Randolph declared in the House that, when cotton had sold at \$30.00 per hundred pounds, he had known a common field hand to bring as much as \$1200.00. *Reg. of Debates, 1827-28, v. 4 Part 1, 1129* In one of his answers in the Randolph Will Litigation Beverley Tucker referred to Randolph's estate as a "vast" one.

P. 359 (a)

"Rain all around us," "Fine rain last night, thanks be to God!" are two entries in his journals that reveal the suspense of a severe drought, and the devout joy awakened by its cessation.

P. 377 (a)

Randolph was intimate with more than one of the Mortons of Charlotte and Prince Edward Counties, and he is said to have entertained a peculiar respect for Major James Morton, of "Willington," Prince Edward County. The Major's *sobriquet* in the Revolutionary Army was "Solid Column"—a name which had its origin in his stocky build. He was well known to Lafayette during the American Revolution, and, when he advanced to pay his respects to the latter at a reception given to the latter at Richmond.



during one of his post-Revolutionary visits to the United States, Lafayette at once recognized him, and, stepping forward, held out both hands to him cordially, and exclaimed: "Vy old soleed coluume. I am 'appy to see you." *Marion Harland's Autobiography*, 17.

P. 379 (a)

"You who have a kindly heart," is the casual tribute paid on one occasion by Joseph Bryan to the personal character of Randolph. *July 16, 1809, Bryan MSS.*

P. 381 (a)

Although a devoted equestrian, I fell far short of him who was as much at home on horseback as an Arab. *Autobiog. of Martin Van Buren*, 429.

P. 381 (b)

To the same effect is the testimony of Nathan Loughborough in the Randolph Will Litigation. "On the morning of the day on which he fought with Mr. Clay, I saw him at his lodgings. He then appeared to be very cheerful, not at all excited, made some remarks on 'the paper system' and its probable fate, talked of blooded horses, and upon no other subject that I now recollect."

P. 384 (a)

James Schouler, and his *History of the United States under the Constitution*, are to be credited in their attempt to delineate the character of Randolph with an elaborate conceit worthy of the age of Cowley and Donne: "In a few vivid passages his genius gleamed mischievously out like a Lucifer in armor passing some sunny aperture in his dark and fathomless descent." *v. 3, 368.* While duplicity was entirely foreign to Randolph's nature, his intense pride of character did offer at times an "inflexible resistance to everything like attempts to read his motives or thoughts." *Autobiog. of Martin Van Buren*, 426. In Van Buren's case, this occasional inscrutability was perhaps due in part to Randolph's knowledge of Van Buren's own peculiarities. He is said to have once told the latter that he could look *at* nothing, but only *over* or *under* or *around* it. *Nathan Loughborough MSS.*

P. 395 (a)

Randolph was not easily outmatched even by a termagant quean. "My servants here," he wrote on one occasion to Dr. Brockenbrough, "have been corrupted by dealing with a very bad woman that keeps an ordinary near me. Twenty odd years ago I saw her, then about 16, come into Charlotte Court to choose a very handsome young fellow of two and twenty for her guardian, whom she married that night. She was then as beautiful a creature as ever I saw (some remains yet survive). They reminded me of Annette and Lubin. But alas! Lubin became a whiskey sot, and Annette a *double you*. Her daughters are following the same vocation, and her



house is a public nuisance. I have been obliged to go there and lecture her. At first she was fierce, but I reminded her of the time when she chose her guardian, extolled her beauty, told her that I could not make war upon a woman, and that with a widow—that if she wanted anything she might command much more from me as a gentleman by a request than she could make by trafficking with my slaves. She burst into tears, promised to do so no more and that I might, in case of a repetition of her offence, '*do with her as I pleased.*' Her tears disarmed me and I withdrew my threat of depriving her of her license, etc., etc. *Voilà un roman.*" *Roanoke, May 30, 1828, Garland, v. 2, 308.* On one occasion Randolph is said to have applied his fingers to his nose when accosted by the scurrilous Mrs. Anna Royall. *Bouldin, 77.* But the reader should not pass judgment upon this contumelious gesture until he has read Mrs. Royall's "Black Book."

P. 403 (a)

"Mrs. Fitzhugh too is one of my old and greatly admired female friends. So is 'my good friend Mrs. H.' You never mention another old friend of mine, Mrs. Carrington. Should you see her make my best respects and regards." *To Eliz. T. Coalter, Feb. 19, 1823, Bryan MSS.*

P. 404 (a)

Another woman who was very much admired by Randolph was Mrs. Rush of Philadelphia: "She is indeed a fine woman," he wrote to Theodore Dudley. "One for whom I have felt a true regard unmixed with the foible of another passion. Fortunately, or unfortunately for me, when I knew her 'I bore a charmed heart.'" *July 21, 1811, Letters to a Y. R., 93.*

P. 409 (a)

"I never in all my professional practice had a more agreeable sitter. He sat to me for three different pictures." *Chester Harding, My Egotistigraphy, 145.*

P. 412 (a)

In the course of his remarkable speech in the Virginia Convention of 1829-30, on the basis of representation, Mr. Morris said that, upon the principle of the Western members, the Thirteen Colonies, if they had been allowed representation by England, would not have been accorded more than twenty or twenty-five representatives in the British Parliament; thirty perhaps. "Here," observes the official reporter of the Debates of the Convention (P. 115) "a shrill and very peculiar voice was heard to say: 'Less than the county of Wilts.'"

P. 415 (a)

"My passion for tobacco (like that for play 15 years ago)," Randolph wrote on one occasion to James M. Garnett, "has entirely deserted me." *Dec. 25, 1809, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* In an earlier letter to Tazewell, in which he made an incidental reference to his old *bête-noir*, Maury, he dis-

closes the fact that he was a snuff-taker too. "Not that I have anything of that little wasp's passion for castigation," he said, "but I go to sleep after dinner *maugre* my snuff box." *June 8, 1804, L. W. Tazewell, Jr., MSS.*

P. 423 (a)

Describing the occasion, Randolph said: "We had no riot, no fuss, no dancing, no great supper, and, what is more uncommon, *no bawdry*. We retired to cards soon after the ceremony was over; refreshments, the very best of their kind, both light and substantial, were on an adjacent sideboard, and occasionally handed round, just as you chose them; and we were all as easy as if we had been in my apartments at Crawford's. The Governor, who did not play, occasionally went out of the room, and finally made his escape without being missed. You are not mistaken in Macon. In a full suit of broadcloth, striped silk stockings and dress shoes, his countenance beaming with benevolence, and his voice softened by the occasion, he went through his part with an elevation of manner that delighted me. Whilst we were dressing, 'they have both been twice married' said he, and, if they have not yet found out for what it was instituted, I shall not tell them. They are not tyros." *J. R. to James M. Garnett, Sept. 28, 1810, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 424 (a)

"We have been lounging *à la Virginienne* at the house of a friend about a day and a half's ride." *J. R. to Francis Scott Key, Oct. 25, 1816, Garland, v. 2, 89.*

P. 428 (a)

One of his last thrusts at "Yankees" was given on his death bed. He descanted upon the honesty of his servant John; said that he was then in possession of all the money that he had with him, and concluded by contrasting him with the "Yankee," who, if entrusted with a similar sum, would soon be off to Canada with it. *Reminiscences of Dr. Francis West, J. C. Grinnan MSS.*

P. 430 (a)

An observation made by Madame de Neuville created a profound impression upon Randolph's mind. "Madame de Neuville," he said in a letter to Elizabeth T. Coalter, "who feeds many of the poor here has a maxim that ought to be written in letters of gold; that, when the rich are sick, they ought to be starved, but, when the poor are sick, they ought to be well fed, and 'nourished with wine,' etc." *Feb. 5, 1822, Bryan MSS.*

P. 434 (a)

The author has endeavored by correspondence and otherwise to trace all the letters written by Randolph to the various persons to whom he was in the habit of writing letters. Those written by him to Benjamin Watkins

Leigh and Mark Alexander were deliberately destroyed. In a letter to Francis N. Watkins, dated June 5, 1856, (Univ. of Va. Libr.) Judge William Leigh stated that in several conversations Randolph requested him to destroy after his death all letters that he had received, except such as had been written by politicians; and that, as soon as he had qualified as executor, he destroyed them all, without exception. We entertain a great respect for the memory of Judge Leigh, but this letter reminds us of the well-known remark of Henry W. Grady, of Georgia, in his speech before the New England Club of New York, on Dec. 21, 1886, that General Sherman was considered an able man in his parts, though some people thought that he was a kind of careless man about fire. *Life of Henry W. Grady, by Harris, 87.* Among the letters destroyed by Judge Leigh, were doubtless Randolph's own letters to Joseph Bryan, which we know were returned to Randolph by Bryan's widow, (*Bryan MSS.*) and Randolph's letters to Stanford. *J. R. to James M. Garnett, Apr. 23, 1816, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 450 (a)

- One of the severest shocks ever given to Randolph's fastidious habits of pronunciation was the barbarous manner in which Ritchie, the editor of the *Richmond Enquirer*, pronounced the name of the Dutch Minister during Andrew Jackson's time: "Your friend the Baron Huygens," he once wrote to Van Buren, "(whom Ritchie, etc. etc., persist in calling 'Huggins' to my great annoyance) to whom I beg to be most respectfully presented, can give you all the information I want." *Roanoke, June 1, 1830, Van Buren Papers.*

P. 458 (a)

Another child, in whom he took the warmest interest, was a son of his friend, Dr. Robinson, to whom he referred in his letters to Theodore Dudley as his "little friend Will"; or his "little friend William." *Letters to a Y. R., Feb. 28, and March 18, 1808, 47 and 51.*

P. 472 (a)

"*Nonum prematur in annum*, is the maxim of the great Roman critic. I do not see therefore why you should not keep your compositions at least half as many days instead of sending me what you have just scribbled off in a hurry, without time perhaps to read it over once." *Letter to Theodore Dudley, March 30, 1808, Letters to a Y. R., 58.*

P. 485 (a)

"I never did 'distrust your affection for me' until the summer before last. The surprise and anguish which then overwhelmed me you witnessed. I would not recall such recollections (it is the office of friendship to bury them in oblivion) but to put you in possession of the clew to my feelings and conduct. I viewed you as one ready and willing from the impulse of your own pride to repay what you considered a debt of gratitude whilst you held the creditor in aversion and contempt that you could not at all times

restrain yourself from expressing by signs and even by words." *J. R. Theodore Dudley, Dec. 19, 1819, Letters to a Y. R., 206.*

P. 493 (a)

In Southside Virginia, during Randolph's time, it was the usage to make deceased persons the subjects of funeral sermons, and in some instances quite a time after they had been interred. Among such instances were the funeral sermons preached in regard to Tudor Randolph and Dr. Bathurst Randolph.

P. 495 (a)

One of the most touching things about the relations of Randolph to St. George was his eagerness to promote any evidence of intellectual aptitude that he saw in him, such as a turn for drawing or wood carving. "St. George," he wrote exultingly to Theodore Dudley on one occasion, "has turned an ivory chessman (a castle) superior to the European model." *Roanoke, Aug. 12, 1811, Letters to a Y. R., 98.*

P. 495 (b)

Apparently Randolph hoped at one time that either St. George or Tudor and Sally, the sister of Theodore Dudley, would make a match of it. "Poor Sally!" he said in one of his letters to Theodore, "I had flattered myself that she would return to Virginia and make one of our family." *Feb. 18, 1816, Letters to a Y. R., 174.*

P. 501 (a)

Skates, fish-hooks, and Christmas boxes, are among the many things which we find Randolph, from time to time, purchasing for the youthful charges who happened to be under his roof exactly as if they were his sons.

P. 506 (a)

Another indication of the keen interest felt by Randolph in young persons of both sexes is found in his references to a sister of Theodore Dudley, of whom he sometimes speaks as "my favorite Fanny." *Dec. 27, 1814, Letters to a Y. R., 170.*

P. 514 (a)

It is said that on the night before the duel between Randolph and Clay, Randolph came into the hotel room at Washington in which his brother, Henry, who did not know that the duel was impending, was, and leaning over him, as he lay in bed, said: "God bless you Hal." *Bishop Beverley D. Tucker MSS.*

P. 520 (a)

In one of his letters to Theodore Dudley, Randolph said of Polly: "She is a good creature as ever breathed, knows nothing of megrims, hartshorn,

spirits of lavender, laudanum, nor *fits*." *Roanoke, Nov. 30, 1810, Letters to a Y. R., 80.*

P. 581 (a)

"That old sinner of 'Marland'", he termed Samuel Smith, in a letter to Dr. John Brockenbrough of Jan. 4, 1822. *Garland v. 2. 157.*

P. 582 (a)

In a letter to William Henry Harrison, Gallatin once took occasion to deny that he had ever said that Randolph was under the British influence. "No man," he declared, "is more free of extraneous influence of any kind than he is." *Sept. 27, 1809, Writings of Gallatin, ed. by Henry Adams, v. 1, 463.*

P. 587 (a)

"Poor N. is destroyed body and mind by paralysis," Randolph wrote to Theodore Dudley from Baltimore. *Feb. 18, 1816, Letters to a Y. R., 174.*

P. 590 (a)

In a letter to James M. Garnett, dated April 14, 1812, Randolph used the words "A quondam friend of mine in Maryland." He doubtless meant Nicholson. *J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 591 (a)

In a letter, dated Feb. 5, 1807, Randolph, after saying that the infernal climate of Washington would sooner or later be the death of half of them—a result that might be of great public advantage, he added, if the selection of victims were judiciously made—prayed God that he would at least take Nicholson's headpiece into his Holy Keeping. *Nicholson MSS. Libr. Cong.*

P. 592 (a)

In their letters to each other, Randolph and Garnett, who was an excellent letter writer, had nicknames for certain individuals. Jefferson was, "St. Thomas of Cantingbury"; John Taylor of Caroline, "Trismegistus"; Richard Stanford of North Carolina, "Win Jenkins"; and John Nicholas, of Richmond, "Falconi."

P. 594 (a)

When Macon was about to die, true to the simplicity of character—"white simplicity" Keats calls it—which is so charming to every truly unsophisticated human being when blended with real moral and mental superiority, he not only called for the bill of his physician and paid it, but paid his undertaker for his prospective services too. *Nathaniel Macon, by Wm. E. Dodd, 398.*

P. 601 (a)

In a letter to Littleton Waller Tazewell, John Randolph said that Langdon was the only man from "the universal Yankee nation" that he had ever

found true as steel, under all circumstances. *Feb. 22, 1826, Littleton Waller Taxewell, Jr., MSS.*

P. 612 (a)

For still other New England men Randolph entertained a great admiration. One was Roger Sherman, "who had scarcely his superior in sagacity," he once said. *Reg. of Deb., 1827-28, v. 4, Part 1, 948.* Another was one of his own contemporaries, James Burrill. The day before the death of Burrill, Randolph wrote to Francis W. Gilmer: "Mr. Burrill, of the Senate (from Rhode Island), lies very ill, and I fear will make the third loss in Congress this winter. He is a very able and amiable man. Mr. King and Mr. Pinkney are the only members of the Senate that may be considered equal (perhaps superior) to him." *Dec. 24, 1820, Bryan MSS.*

P. 621 (a)

Notwithstanding the miff disclosed by the letter from Randolph to Key, the friendship between Lloyd and Randolph remained unbroken. In Randolph's letters are occasional references to Lloyd's "jollifications," as Randolph once termed them; and on one occasion James M. Garnett, who also knew Lloyd well, wrote to Randolph that he longed for something with which to dissipate his "humor," as much as ever a breeding lady, or their friend Lloyd, did for their peppermint and magnesia. *July 21, 1810, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* Lloyd's habits, however, were no more convivial than became the master of Wye, and a link in a long chain of high-bred and hospitable gentleman. At one time or another, he was Governor of Maryland, a member of the House of Representatives and a member of the United States Senate, and he was highly respected in both public and private life.

P. 623 (a)

"I can hardly figure to myself the ideal of a Republican statesman more perfect and complete than he (John Taylor of Caroline) was in reality—plain and solid, a wise counsellor, a ready and vigorous debater, acute and comprehensive, ripe in all historical and political knowledge, innately Republican, modest, courteous, benevolent, hospitable, a skilful practical farmer giving his time to his farm and his books when not called by an emergency to the public service, and returning to his books and his farm when the emergency was over. His whole character was announced in his looks and deportment and in his uniform (Senatorial) dress—the coat, waistcoat and pantaloons of the same 'London brown', and in the cut of a former fashion—beaver hat with ample brim—fine white linen—and a gold-headed cane, carried not for show but for use and support when walking and bending under the heaviness of years." *30 Years View, by Benton (1864), 45.*

P. 630 (a)

Gilmer fully shared Randolph's aversion to the institution of slavery. "I begin to be impatient to see Virginia once more," he wrote to William

Wirt from England, "It is more like England than any other part of the United States—slavery *non obstante*. Remove that stain, blacker than the Ethiopian's skin, and annihilate our political schemers, and it would be the fairest realm on which the sun ever shone." *July, 16, 1824, Trent's English Culture in Virginia, 68.*

P. 633 (a)

Two very handsome tributes to Randolph were brought out by the testimony in the Randolph Will Litigation. "He was an accomplished gentleman," John Taliaferro testified. "In fine," declared Nathan Loughborough, "I believe Mr. Randolph while living (it is still my belief) to have been among the most wise, honest and sagacious of his species."

P. 637 (a)

Few things have been circulated more widely in Randolph's District than words of commendation written by him about one of his neighbors. A letter from his pen which was long, if it is not still preserved, was one which he gave to his neighbor Elisha E. Hundley introducing him to John Rowan, of Kentucky. "Mr. Hundley," the letter said, "is a plain, industrious quiet man, who minds his own affairs and does not meddle with other people's business." *Bouldin, 230.*

P. 640 (a)

"His (Littleton Waller Tazewell's) perceptions are as intuitive and as strong as those of Mr. Marshall. He has as much intrepidity of intellect as Mr. Pinkney, and great boldness, but no insolence; no exultation of manner. He wants only ambition to make him rival, nay, perhaps, even to surpass, the accomplished champion of the Federal Bar." *Sketches by Francis W. Gilmer, 36.* Indeed Gilmer said in the same sketch, that Tazewell was endowed with the best and most various gifts that he had ever known to concur in any individual.

P. 670 (a)

Randolph once said sarcastically in the House that the excellence of the postal establishment in his District was such that a broad-wheeled wagon, laden with two heavy hogsheads of tobacco, would go from his house to Richmond in a day and a half less time than the mail did; which was besides only weekly. *A. of C., 1816-17, v. 2, 466.* Some nine or ten years later, he declared in the House that he could not get a reply to Washington from Halifax County, in Southside Virginia, under three weeks, even if there were no miscarriage of the mail; but that the Postmaster General had promised to establish a bi-weekly mail which would bring a reply in 10 days.

P. 676 (a)

In 1804 he had five horses in training for the race track. *Letter to Jos. H. Nicholson, Aug. 27, 1804, Nicholson MSS., Libr. Cong.* And in his

*Autobiography*, Van Buren tells us that Randolph was the owner at the time of his death of more than 100 horses altogether. 421.

P. 676 (b)

"Miss W. (his mare Wildfire) and Mr. R. are both equally ignorant who 'King Caucus' is," he once wrote to Martin Van Buren. "If a horse at all points his company would be peculiarly acceptable to the lady at this juncture, who is pining for the loss of her late companion." *Van Buren Papers, Libr. Cong.*

P. 680 (a)

Describing the departure of Randolph, on one occasion, from Washington with a young spaniel that some friend had doubtless given to him, Nathaniel Macon wrote to Weldon N. Edwards: "He carried with him a puppy of the same kind, scarcely large enough to follow his chair in which he went." *May 2, 1828, N. C. Hist. Soc. Papers.*

P. 682 (a)

In a characteristic message to Theodore Dudley, Randolph once wrote: "Beverley and Polly desire their best regards to you, so do Carlo, Echo and Dido, and also little Dash, who arrived last night in the wagon." *Roanoke, Oct. 29, 1810, Letters to a Y. R., 73.*

P. 687 (a)

"Bodily motion seems to be some relief to mental uneasiness, and I was delighted yesterday morning to hear that the snipes are come." *J. R. to Francis Scott Key, Mar. 2, 1819, Garland, v. 2, 96.*

P. 688 (a)

On one occasion, when shooting, he met with an accident which, we cannot but be surprised, should not have happened oftener before the invention of the breech-loading gun. After telling his friend Garnett how one of his toes had been completely crushed by the newly-shod hoof of a horse, he said: "Although I could bear neither boot nor shoe on the wounded foot, I soon made a shift to go a-shooting on horseback. On reloading my piece, the powder took fire, as I poured it into the barrel, and, communicating to the flask, which had been previously filled, it blew up with a horrible explosion. Brunette, whose ears were smartly singed, started and set off at a pretty brisk gate. Although I lost neither my seat nor my gun, yet, my right hand being wholly useless, I was compelled to drop the latter in order to seize the reins which I had no other means of shortening but by the assistance of my teeth." *Roanoke, Nov. 6, 1810, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.* The explosion was due to a piece of ignited wadding which had stuck to the barrel when it had been last discharged. The sore foot, Randolph thought, probably saved his life; for it was too sore to bear the butt of his gun when he was reloading and consequently, when the accident occurred, he had elevated the muzzle of his gun as high as his



right arm could reach. The sides of the flask were picked up more than 100 yards apart and its top was never found at all.

P. 690 (a)

"I should rather have Essex than any nurse or attendant I ever saw." *Jan. 27, 1817, Letters to a Y. R., 184.*

P. 690 (b)

"A little pet negro, about three years old, whom you never saw, and whom a red flannel frock has made as happy as Queen Dolly at her Levee." *J. R. to James M. Garnett, Dec. 31, 1813, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 690 (c)

"The wants of some 200 wretches, whom I never think of without perplexity and dismay, diversify my time." *J. R. to James M. Garnett, Dec. 22, 1818, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 696 (a)

The intimate contact between master and slave in Virginia is exemplified in an effective manner in one of the letters from Randolph to James M. Garnett: "I must rouse Jupiter," he said, "who is sleeping very soundly on a comfortable bed by the fire, and prepare for a short journey to Sterett Ridgely's." *Georgetown, Feb. 11, 1816, J. M. Garnett, Jr., MSS.*

P. 700 (a)

After Randolph returned from Russia John took advantage of his master's loss of reason, and reverted to his former bad habits, according to the testimony of Wyatt Cardwell in the Randolph Will Litigation. He not only got drunk whenever he had a chance, but purloined some money that belonged to his master and gambled with it. This witness also testified that Essex too was in the habit of drinking. John was No. 285 in the list of negroes emancipated by Randolph which was registered at Charlotte C. H., and his wife Betsey No. 286. Both are described in the list as being "of black complexion." John's age is given as 63 yrs., and his height as 5 feet and 2 inches.

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